Oxfordshire Guardian
WEST OXFORDSHIRE

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Inside this week:

Con man jailed for four years still on the run p5

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WEST-STROKE!

Hotel staff clean up their act!

STAFF at West Oxfordshire's newest hotel have been doing their bit for the local community by taking to the streets for a series of litter picks.

Witney's Premier Inn is set to open on February 3 but its staff were keen to volunteer around the town before they begin their duties at the new 57-bed hotel.

Hotel staff carried out litter picks at the Burwell Meadow estate, Ducklington Lane and the Springs area on January 25.

Cllr David Harvey, cabinet member for Environment said: "It's good to see a new company coming into the area wanting to be involved in their community.

"The offer to help with a community litter pick was one we couldn't turn down as it was an opportunity too good to be missed."

Sam Rowlands, the hotel's operations manager added: "When we open a Premier Inn anywhere in the country we like to go out and do something for the community. It's our way of saying hello and trying to fit in."

• *Cllr David Harvey (left) and Sam Rowlands (right) join the Premier Inn staff just before their litter pick.*

District eighth in country for regular swimming sessions

By **Adam Flinn**
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

WEST Oxfordshire has made the top 10 of a national poll for the number of people who swim at least once a week, in results published by Diabetes UK.

Just short of 10 per cent of adults in the district swim on a regular basis, putting West Oxfordshire eighth out of 221 local authorities nationwide.

Diabetes UK has published the table to launch its Swim 22 challenge, where participants swim 22 miles at their local pool between February 22 and May 22.

Jill Steaton, South East regional manager for the charity, said: "Swimming is a great way to keep physically active, which is really important for preventing Type 2 diabetes or helping to manage diabetes if you already have it.

"For areas lower down the table this doesn't have to be bad news.

"We want these results to challenge everyone in the area to make a splash in their local pool and give swimming a go.

"Swim 22 can be the spur you need to take up swimming and to challenge yourself to get fitter.

"Also, because you can do the 22 miles over three months, you can gradually build up your fitness and hopefully make swimming regularly a habit you end up sticking to."

Cllr Richard Langridge, cabinet member responsible for leisure at West Oxfordshire District Council, was pleased with the news.

He said: "I am delighted that people in West Oxfordshire are amongst England's most regular swimmers.

"The council is committed to helping people stay active, and (leisure operator) GLL run an extensive programme for all ages and abilities at our leisure centres."

Robert Wood, partnership manager for GLL, added: "In addition to being a crucial life skill, swimming is a fantastic way in which to keep fit or recover from injury as it is a non-weight bearing activity.

"It is fantastic that so many local people of all ages have recognised the benefits that swimming offers.

"In 2013 we saw over 350,000 swimmers through our doors demonstrating why the district is in the top-10 of Diabetes UK's ranking of regular swimmers."

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Man jailed after Kidlington siege

THE man responsible for last year's 'Siege of Morton Avenue' has been jailed for 12 years for a series of serious crimes.

Daniel Rodriquez was involved with a 12-hour armed stand-off with officers in Kidlington on July 9 last year.

However, has was talked out of the house on the day by officers, and no-one was harmed.

He was charged with four firearms offences, which he admitted on October 18, and was given a total of four years in prison.

The 38-year-old was also sentenced to a further eight years behind bars for three counts of rape.

A six-year sentence for sexual assault was also passed, but this will run concurrently with his rape sentence.

Senior police officers paid tribute to the work their staff did to nullify the potential danger of the July stand-off.

Investigating officer Det Sgt Jim Holmes from Banbury Force CID said: "I would like to thank the officers involved in this investigation, those who worked within the early stages of this investigation and then those involved in the later stages.

"It was their tireless work that resulted in the early guilty plea and prevented a lengthy and traumatic trial."

Cherwell and West Oxfordshire LPA commander Supt Colin Paine said: "The incidents of that day in July had a substantial impact on the local community in Kidlington and saw some residents confined to their homes while officers persuaded Rodriquez to hand himself in.

"I would like to praise the community for their helpful response and support for the police on that day, which enabled officers to go about their work and ultimately lead to a successful resolution without any harm to residents.

By James Booker
jamesb@taylornewspapers.co.uk

• *Daniel Rodriquez will serve 12 years for firearms offences, rape and sexual assault*

"Incidents of this nature are not just rare, they are practically unheard of, and I hope that the communities across not just Oxfordshire, but the wider Thames Valley, can take some reassurance from the effective, professional and ultimately successful way this incident was handled."

Have your say on area's rights of way

OXFORDSHIRE County Council is asking the public for their views on rights of way in the county, to decide how to manage access to the countryside for visitors and residents over the next 10 years.

The council is consulting on their draft Rights of Way Management Plan, to ensure that public expectation is reflected and is balanced with the resources available.

Oxfordshire is home to 1,730 miles of footpath and 672 miles of bridleway, along with countless signs, stiles, bridges and culverts.

Cllr David Nimmo-Smith, cabinet member of environment, said: "Oxfordshire's countryside, urban and rural rights of way and landscape contribute to it being an outstanding place in which to live, work and visit.

"Access to these provides significant economic, health and well-being, and environmental benefits.

"County council finances are severely restricted and this is likely to continue over the life of this plan.

"Despite this we will aim to manage the public rights of way and countryside access network effectively and efficiently, working with communities, farmers, landowners, partner organisations, volunteers and users."

The plan is being emailed to town and parish councils across Oxfordshire, and a paper copy is available at County Hall in Oxford. For more information, go to www.oxfordshire.gov.up/rowip.

Discovery 'offers a rare window into marine past'

SCIENTISTS at the University of Oxford have discovered a new fossil from the extinct species Megacheira, suggesting it is a distant ancestor of insects, arachnids and crustaceans, known as arthropods.

The Megacheira were marine-dwelling 'short great appendage' arthropods, that were defined by their claw-like front limbs.

By discovering this fossil in Herefordshire, university palaeobiologists believe it supports the notion that Megacheira came before the last common ancestor of all arthropods in the tree of life.

The fossil found recently has been named Enalikter aphson, measures 2.4cm, and has a rounded rectangular head, no eyes and a whip-like feature from the front of its mouth that may have been used in feeding.

Professor Derek Siveter, lead author of the study from the Oxford University Museum of Natural History and Department of Earth Sciences, was pleased with the find.

He said: "Enalikter aphson has a soft and flexible body so it is incredible that it survived.

"The nodule acted like a womb and kept the creature free from decay and destruction, which would normally have happened very quickly. It offers a rare window on the marine community back then."

New director for Ashmolean

THE University of Oxford has appointed a new director for the city's Ashmolean Museum, who will take up the position from October 1.

Dr Alexander Sturgis arrives from his position as director of the Holburne Museum in Bath, where he has been since 2005, and has previously held various posts at the National Gallery in London.

He takes over from Professor Christopher Brown CBE, who has been the Ashmolean's director since 1998.

Dr Sturgis said: "I am thrilled to be appointed the next director of the Ashmolean.

"It is a huge honour to be given the chance to lead one of the country's great museums, however hard it will be to leave the Holburne after eight exceptionally happy and eventful years.

"I look forward to working with the Ashmolean team and Oxford University to build on all that has been achieved at the museum in recent years."

Oxford University's vice-chancellor Professor Andrew Hamilton said: "The museum has undergone a substantial transformation in recent years under the outstanding leadership of Christopher Brown.

"I am fully confident that Dr Sturgis will take forward with equal distinction the next stage of the Ashmolean's development."

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Questions raised over Didcot land pitch plans

DIDCOT'S independent councillor has raised concerns over a consultation for the possible purchase of land at Hadden Hill for proposed new sports facilities.

Members of the public will receive a letter on Monday outlining Didcot Town Council's plans to purchase and prepare 25 acres of land on Hadden Hill, which could cost around £1m, to address a shortfall of sports facilities and pitches.

As reported at the end of last year, the site in question is off the A4130 and next to Hadden Hill Golf Course.

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By Jack Johnson
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Cllr Neville Harris, who is on the town, district and county council, believes the consultation is lacking "in a great deal of relevant information".

He also says the responsibility of providing leisure facilities rests with South Oxfordshire District Council, a thought echoed by deputy Conservative group leader on the town council Cllr Tony Harbour who feels the Hadden Hill site would become "a financial burden to the town".

"It does not make clear that the duty to enable people to participate in organised outdoor sport on safely accessible sports facilities rests with district councils, in our case SODC, who are constantly reviewing trends and identified need in discharging this responsibility," Cllr Harris said.

"At Great Western Park SODC, aided by developer funding, is making provision that includes a sports pavilion and facilities for outdoor sports.

"SODC have acted responsibly as providers with regard to sporting facilities in all areas of the towns development.

"Planning proposals for the North East Development will include, again in conjunction with developers, funding for outdoor sporting facilities plus a leisure centre with swimming pool.

"SODC are currently in talks with Didcot Rugby and Cricket Clubs with a view to them using part of the facilities at Great Western Park.

"This can only be good news in terms of community cohesiveness in helping bring our fragmented town together."

Cllr Harris also questioned why current open spaces such as Ladygrove Park were going unused.

Town council leader Margaret Davies says Ladygrove cannot be booked by sporting teams because of rocks under the surface.

Cllr Davies said: "The town council has a shortage of recreational land. They are totally booked out. Ladygrove Park cannot be booked out because the surface that SODC provided 15-20 years ago is a health hazard."

She also addressed the matter of which authority is responsible for providing leisure facilities.

"Nobody has that responsibilty which is why it has languished since before 1997 which was when the first study was carried out," Cllr Davies said. "It was in no man's land. The town council has the power to do this legally."

She added: "It is important to the identity of everyone in any town that it has open green spaces and plenty of recreational space.

"It helps give people the opportunity to play and socialise and we are desperately short of it."

Keeping an eye on the forecourts

WEST Oxfordshire is set to benefit from the anti-crime scheme Forecourt Watch, set up to combat the increasing number of drive-off thefts from petrol stations.

The scheme has been successful in Cherwell since it was introduced in April 2012, and has now been expanded to cover 16 garages in the west of the county.

Sgt Kevin Tobin, of the Cherwell Officer Support Team, has been running the scheme in Cherwell and is responsible for bringing it to West Oxfordshire.

He said: "Petrol drive-offs for the first three quarters from April 2013 have been cut by 46 per cent, 24 per cent and nine per cent respectively compared to 2011, with one garage seeing 75 per cent less fuel theft.

"In Cherwell, all 22 petrol stations are taking part, and now all 16 garages in the west of the county are taking part and will benefit from the initiative."

As well as tackling people driving off without paying for petrol, they are also focusing on stolen numberplates.

Supt Colin Paine, commander for Cherwell and West Oxon, added: "Petrol stations have been visited by local officers to encourage their participation.

"Evidence packs will be provided to enable forecourt staff to report offences quickly and accurately."

Osborne announces £67million Oxon science boost

• *George Osborne MP, pictured with Oxford West and Abingdon MP Nicola Blackwood and Professor Patrick Grant at Begbroke Science Park on Tuesday*

FOUR business 'incubator' centres in Oxford are set to receive £67million of investment to develop world leading science technology, the Chancellor George Osborne has announced.

As part of a tour of Begbroke Science Park on Tuesday afternoon, Mr Osborne said that the government would provide £30million funding, complemented by industry, local authorities and universities.

Over 1,800 permanent jobs are expected as a result of the funding, as well a number of other temporary positions, for example in construction.

Funding will be split between a new 'Innovation Accelerator' at Begbroke, the 'Oxford Bioescalator' in Headington, the expansion of a centre in Culham and the Harwell research centre.

It is hoped that the funding will establish the region as a centre for high-tech production, and is the centre piece of the Oxford City Deal.

Mr Osborne said: "I think the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal is a great boost for the city, and it will be a great boost for jobs.

"I'm putting this money in here because it's not just about the future of this area, it's about the entire country to invest in science here in Begbroke, Harwell, Culham and the Bioescalator.

"The £30million is a vote of confidence in Oxford, and from it will flow many thousands of jobs, not just investment in science but also in transport."

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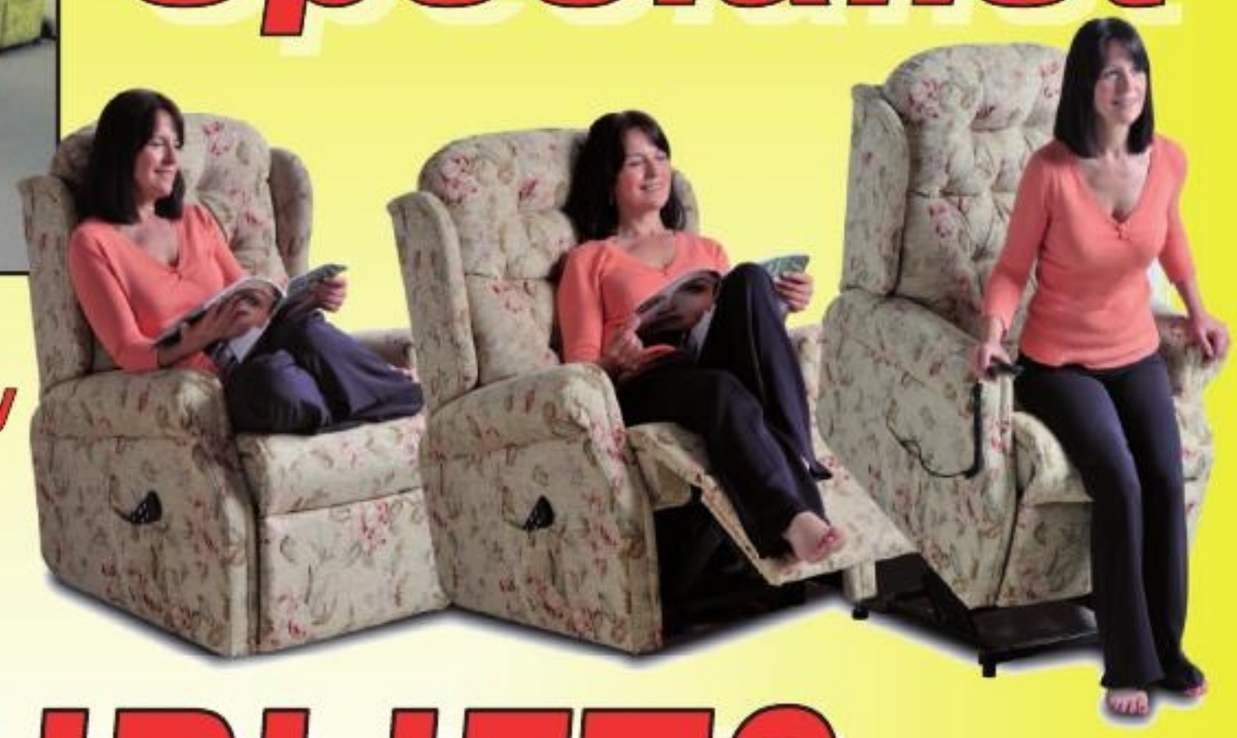

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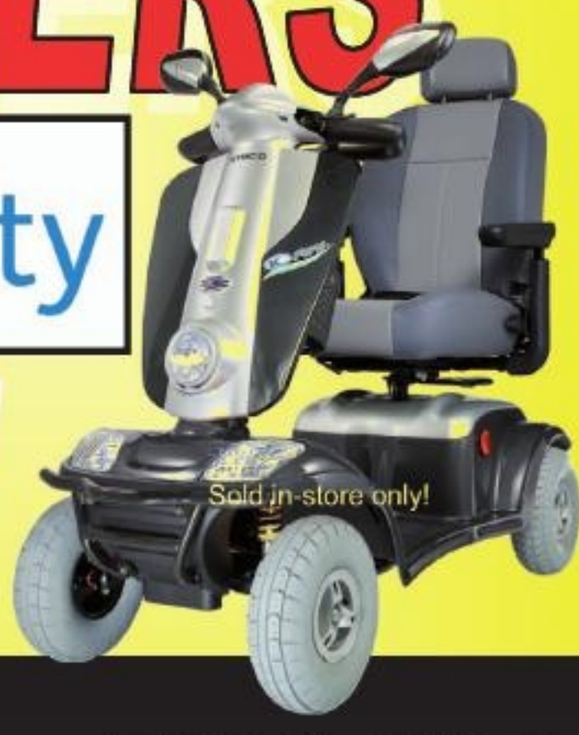

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Con man jailed for four years still on the run

POLICE have appealed for information on a Wantage con man, who stole £250,000 of items from people, who remains at large.

Andrew Griffin, 43, posed under several false identities as a representative from major companies, as he conned people out of expensive artwork, IT equipment and televisions.

He admitted 17 counts of fraud when he appeared at Oxford Crown Court on June 14 last year.

However, he failed to show up for initial sentencing on July 12, and has not been seen since.

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By James Booker
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Griffin, of Market Place, Wantage, was sentenced to four years behind bars in his absence last Thursday.

The offences took place between November 2012 and March 2013.

His actions were brought to light after reports of £3,000 worth of Christmas hampers were conned from a small business in Sussex.

Investigating officer, PC Andy Robinson from TVP's Action Fraud and Crime Unit, said the investigation led him and his team through "a maze of false internet domains, telephone forwarding services, virtual private networks and anonymous pre-paid Visa cards".

Griffin was identified as a suspect, and officers raided his flat on March 20 last year, finding £100,000 of stolen goods.

Fellow investigating officer, DC Lee Dix of South and Vale LPA, said: "Griffin targeted small businesses, preying on the current economic climate of struggling and competing times to perpetrate his fraud on businesses that the prospect of securing contracts with huge corporations would be desirable.

"This was a highly organised and professional fraud committed by a career fraudster.

"Mr Griffin, who had a taste for the finer things in life, conned small companies out of prestige goods for his own gain and continued to con goods that he sold on to fund his lifestyle.

"This man deserves to be in prison and we urge anyone who knows where he is to get in touch."

PC Robinson said: "We would also like to take the opportunity to thank the staff at the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau who brought the initial report to our attention after it being reported to Action Fraud.

"Without their initial hard work, the investigation would never have started.

"This is an example of how the new national fraud reporting system can effectively link cross-border criminals committing fraud and bring them to justice."

• *If you have any information as to the whereabouts of Andrew Griffin, call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111*

Wallingford Birthing Centre open once more after getting a makeover

WALLINGFORD Birthing Centre was officially re-opened yesterday after extensive refurbishment.

The makeover includes two new birthing pools, an additional birthing room, ensuite facilities in two existing birthing rooms and the postnatal ward, and a refurbished family room.

Cathy Warwick, chief executive of the Royal College of Midwives, opened the centre yesterday.

"I am delighted to be able to come to Wallingford and see the difference which the grant from the Improving Birthing Environments Capital Fund has made," she said.

"It is increasingly being recognised that the right birth environment plays an important role in a woman's chances of having a normal birth.

"This funding has given the Wallingford Birthing Unit the opportunity to improve the environment to meet the needs of the local population."

The unit, run by Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, is one of more than 100 across the country to benefit from a grant from the Department of Health's 2012 Improving Birthing Environments Capital Fund, of which Wallingford was awarded £350,000.

The increase in the number of pools and birthing rooms available at Wallingford helps staff to provide more choice for women in pain management and the opportunity to birth in water.

The unit is expected to start receiving its first women to the refurbished unit from Monday.

News Bites

Police appeal

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a man was left unconscious outside an Oxford takeaway.

CCTV images have been released of a man allegedly involved in the attack on the 25-year-old victim following an altercation in Dominos Pizza on November 10.

Five injured

FIVE people were taken to hospital after a fire in Oxford yesterday.

Firefighters were called to the house in Mallard Close, Blackbird Leys, in the early hours of yesterday morning.

One occupant, a 33-year-old man, suffered a broken leg in the incident.

The other four occupants, two men and two women, were also treated.

Police are still trying to determine whether the fire was started deliberately.

Call 101 with information or, alternatively, call Crimestoppers.

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It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Josh Florey feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 10 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps.

Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service Oxfordshire from their local depots and Josh is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truthis that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

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Duo arrested after 'proactive' drug operation

TWO men have been arrested on drugs charges following what police are calling a 'proactive' operation in Oxford last Thursday.

Officers from the city centre neighbourhood policing team conducted patrols across the Friars Wharf Estate, specifically targeting drug dealers.

An 18-year-old and 19-year-old were arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply cannabis, and released on bail until March 31.

PC Gareth Herniman said: "We were tasked with disrupting and deterring recent drug activity in the area.

"The team made two arrests and seized a large amount of class B drugs."

Neighbourhood inspector Andy Thompson added: "Members of the community should not have to suffer the effects of drugs in the area, as the individuals concerned in the use and supply can be linked to other types of criminality.

"We are committed to tackling any reports of drug activity and will focus our attention on those who are linked to such reports.

"I would always encourage members of the community who have information about any crime to call 101."

Cllr - where are the lights for our park?

AN OXFORD City Councillor has vented his frustration that lights have still not been installed at the Marston Recreation Ground, despite being approved in July last year.

Cllr Mick Haines, independent councillor for Marston, has been campaigning for the lights for a number of years, having delivered a petition on the subject to Downing Street in 2010.

But he has said that he is "very disappointed" that the lights are still not in place.

"It's absolutely ridiculous," said Cllr Haines. "I feel sorry for all the people who want to use this recreation ground, go to work in the mornings and come back at night, and the kiddies playing.

"I expected the lights in well before now. There are excuses and excuses and still we're no further forward, and I was only told again the other day that the funding is still there for them.

"This has been an ongoing thing, and people keep saying to me 'when are we going to get the lights?', and I can only say I'm trying the best I can, but I think it's thoroughly disgusting that we've waited this long for it."

By Adam Flinn
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Cllr Mary Clarkson, who also represents Marston on the city council, shared Cllr Haines' concerns.

She said: "I've spoken to the officer responsible for the lighting and he is currently waiting for some design details before placing the order for the lights.

"There have been various complications over the lights. Firstly, some Purcell Road residents were unhappy about having any lighting at the back of their properties.

"Secondly, some of the Stainer Place residents, whose homes back on to the recreational ground, were worried about light pollution.

"A scheme is being developed which will both reassure them and provide enough light for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians in the park.

"These two reasons are the cause of the delay. It is frustrating and regrettable but equally it is essential to get a design which meets the needs of residents, pedestrians and cyclists."

• *Cllr Mick Haines petitioning for the lights in 2012. Inset, Cllr Mary Clarkson*

Stay aware of the bogus tax return sites

OXFORDSHIRE County Council's Trading Standards team are warning people using websites to process tax returns to check that they are actually on official government sites.

It comes as 13 complaints have been made in Oxfordshire in the past fortnight about websites that can charge up to £800 on top of genuine government charges.

Many users do not realise a site is unofficial unless they get to the fees page, where charges quoted are often much higher than those on government sites.

Since October, 19 similar complaints have also been made to Trading Standards about driving license application sites, and a further 15 about ones that deal with passport applications.

Kate Davies, team leader for Trading Standards' Public Protection Team, said: "We want to educate and warn the public about websites which look to charge far more than the official government sites do.

"Now is a time of year when many residents are submitting tax returns, and they could be easily duped into parting with more money than they have to by using these sites."

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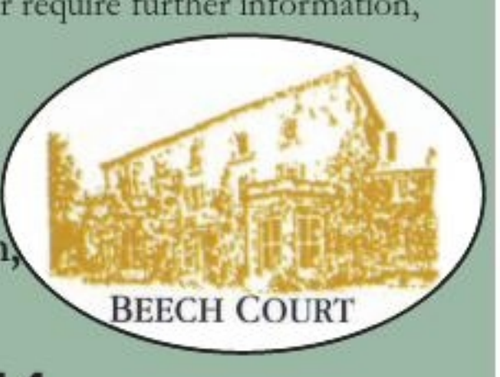

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Damp, mouldy and covered in cockroaches

TWO landlords have been fined just over £3,000 each after they were found to be renting out an unlicensed House in Multiple Occupation.

Twelve people, including three children, were living in damp and mouldy conditions with a heavy cockroach infestation in a three bed maisonette in Blackbird Leys Road.

Oxford City Council officers also discovered no fire measures in place.

Landlords, Felix Valentim Da Conceicao and Ventura Valentim Da Conceicao, who also live in Blackbird Leys Road, pleaded guilty when they appeared at Oxford Magistrates Court. They had not complied with Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations as there was inadequate fire protection and a lack of detection, disrepair throughout and the property was in poor decorative state.

The court fined the men £3,050 each, including a total of £1,000 in costs and a £50 victim surcharge.

Cllr Ed Turner, deputy leader of Oxford City Council, said: "The Council has a responsibility to help protect the vulnerable and ensure that people who are renting do not live in these conditions. The HMO scheme works to tackle this and the team are working hard to find those landlords who think they can evade the system."

Green vision for future of Oxford

By **Jack Johnson**
jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

A MAJOR initiative which aims to attract £400m in low carbon and renewable projects by 2020 has been unveiled across the county.

The OxFutures project, a partnership between the city and county council with the Low Carbon Hub, is calling local businesses, communities and investors in to action.

According to experts, the idea is to position Oxfordshire at the forefront of low carbon innovation and spearhead the nation's transition to a sustainable energy future.

The project has already received a £1.2m grant from Intelligent Energy Europe while the rest of the money will come from organisations who want to put cash into their own scheme while local communities can also invest.

Oxford Bus Company, with the help of the Low Carbon Hub, has installed solar panels on the roof of its Cowley office while £320,000 was raised in 10 days for the Osney Lock hydro project.

Dr Barbara Hammond, CEO of the Low Carbon Hub, said: "The whole point of the project is that it puts money in to communities so they can work on energy projects. The whole model is about getting people engaged in making a change.

"People will see that it is a positive change and not something that is scary or difficult or something that they don't want because they are involved in making it happen."

• *Dr Barbara Hammond, pictured at last week's OxFutures launch, is encouraging communities to invest in energy projects (Picture by Marc West)*

The initiative is said to secure Oxford's target to reduce its carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020 and to reach the county council's target of a 50 per cent reduction in carbon emissions by 2030.

Cllr John Tanner, city council board member for a Cleaner, Greener Oxford, added: "It is inevitable that with higher energy costs that prices are not going to come down.

"But everybody, in order to make their living affordable so they can pay for their energy bills, needs to be energy efficient. The problem with fossil fuels is once they have been burnt they are gone for good whereas with renewable energy it is here for my grandchildren and great grandchildren and will mean that our planet will continue to be liveable.

"Oxford is the city of dreaming spires where people are not afraid to dream big.

"We have got a lot of clever people here, we've got a lot of money, we've got an innovative and progressive population and I think that give us an advantage."

News Bites

Rape charge

A 23-YEAR-OLD Headington man appeared at Oxford Crown Court last Friday after he was charged with the rape of a 19-year-old woman in the city.

The man, from Alden Crescent, allegedly raped the woman at a towpath near Hythe Bridge Street on January 19, and he has been remanded in custody until April 7.

A second man, aged 32, was also arrested in connection with the incident, and has been released on bail until March 24.

Activity funds for youngsters

FUNDING that will enable young people in Oxford to enjoy holiday activities during Easter, summer and Christmas has been approved.

The city council is providing £130,000 of funding for the delivery of activities for 8-19-year-olds in areas of the city including Barton, Wood Farm, Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys, Littlemore, Rose Hill, Cowley Marsh and East Oxford.

Qualified and experienced organisations and individuals can now submit applications for six weeks worth of activities.

To be eligible for the funding, applicants must provide activities for either one week during the Easter holidays, four weeks during the summer break, one week during the Christmas holidays or within one week of half term periods.

Cllr Steve Curran, board member for Young People, Education and Community Development, said: "This funding will help provide good quality activities for young people in our city.

"Holiday activities are an essential part of the Council's offer to young people and their families.

"We are delighted to offer funding to allow them to take part in high quality pursuits."

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Downton tourism cranks up a notch

Communities - be vigilant

SOUTH and Vale police are encouraging people to join their local Neighbourhood Watch or even start their own as the crackdown on rural crime continues.

Over the last couple of weeks, 250 rural alert signs have been put up, over 50 items of property have been marked while 12 smart water kits have been sold.

Supt Andy Boyd, local area commander for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, said: "One of the challenges for us is to encourage people to call us when they see people who appear to be out of place or be paying undue attention to items of property.

"They should take their registration numbers and ring us.

"What we want to do is get them involved, be signed up to community messages and Twitter and join or start a Neighbourhood Watch scheme."

By **Adam Flinn**
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

FANS of television drama Downton Abbey can now enjoy tours and a leaflet showing filming locations across West Oxfordshire, which have been developed by the district council.

The council's tourism service is hoping it will prove popular with overseas visitors in particular, and it has been working with tour operator International Friends to introduce the Downton Abbey guided tours.

They have been designed for small groups and will take visitors to Bampton – the scene of the village of Downton in all four series of the show.

Visitors will also be taken to Cogges in Witney, The Swan Inn at Swinbrooks and The Old Forge at Shilton, as well as local landmarks such as Blenheim Palace. The accompanying leaflet details filming locations, as well as giving information about the local area.

Cllr Richard Langridge, cabinet member with responsibility for tourism and local economy, praised the scheme.

He said: "It's hardly surprising, given its beautiful setting and scenery, that West Oxfordshire is often chosen as a film location and the success of Downton Abbey has really put the spotlight on the area.

• *WODC tourism development officer Chris Jackson outside St Mary's Church in Bampton with the leaflets*

"We are proud to not only support our tourism industry, but also work actively to encourage its growth and ensure West Oxfordshire is a must-see destination for people from across the world.

"By working with an experienced tour operator, we are tapping into a growing demand from overseas visitors and this is good news for the district."

Cllr Pauline Smith, of Bampton Parish Council, said: "We love having the Downton cast here and welcome this initiative by West Oxfordshire.

"It will enable us to share our lovely village and we look forward to welcoming new visitors.

"Although we no longer have the 13 pubs there when Downton is set, we hope these tours will enable us to offer a traditional Cotswold hospitality."

Jimmy Greene, director of International Friends, added: "It's been fantastic working with the team to launch a selection of Downton Abbey-themed day trips and overnight tours.

"From day one the interest from trade and consumers has been exceptionally high, particularly from North America."

Councillor's Column

Cllr Bob Price
Leader of Oxford City Council

More needs to be done

WEST and South Oxford and South Hinksey have been hit by serious flooding FIVE times in this century! On each occasion, houses have been flooded, drains have overflowed and brought sewage into homes and gardens, roads and railway lines have been closed, children have not been able to go to school, vulnerable and elderly residents have had to be transported to safe accommodation and businesses have been hit. This is a situation that simply cannot be allowed to continue without a major intervention by the expert authorities to tackle the problem.

It is not good enough for the Prime Minister to wander around the country claiming that 'we will learn the lessons'; the Environment Agency took note of the increasing frequency of flooding around Oxford nearly five years ago and devised an excellent plan to resolve the problems which the Government, only concerned to cut public spending, has not allowed to proceed.

The Western Conveyance, as the project is called, would act as an additional channel around the west of the city, between Botley and Oxford, and would take flood waters away from the main river course and into the flat land south of Kennington. Most of the year, it would be unused and empty, and would provide a green swathe around the flood plain.

At peak water times, however, it would become a storm water 'drain' that would dramatically reduce the huge volume of water that pours over Osney Weir every minute when Oxford is affected by flooding.

Our two MPs, the County Council and the City Council are united in pressing the government to provide the necessary resources to commission this project.

Even if agreed this year, it would be near the end of the decade before it could be completed and in that time, who can tell how many more emergency situations will have occurred?

The January 2014 flooding was the worst since 1947 and the news programmes are still showing us the dreadful situation for the villages on the Somerset Levels.

In Oxford, hundreds of homes in the west and south of the city would have gone under if the water level had risen only 10-12 more centimetres. For Oxford, as elsewhere, these floods must be a wake-up call and urgent action taken to put remedial measures in place.

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Students set to lock and learn

CHIPPING Norton School will present to a Dragons Den-style panel today for a chance to win £5,000 and bring an innovative laser tag idea to change learning habits to life.

Students and teachers hope to transform the school by creating a laser tag learning zone which is aptly called 'Lock and Learn'.

Led by Science teacher Steve Mavromichalis, the idea behind the learning zone is to improve the quality of life for the school community.

The entry is all part of 'The School We'd Like' competition which is organised by insurance company Zurich Municipal.

Hundreds of schools entered the nationwide competition with outdoor learning a clear priority for the students who have taken part.

Paul Tombs, head of Education at Zurich Municipal, said: "Entries focusing on outdoor learning have once again surpassed every other category, highlighting just how important this is to today's students. This competition gives schools the chance to create fun and educational facilities that students really want.

The school was unavailable for comment.

MP checks in on Mobile Homes Act

By **Adam Flinn**
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

• *Katy Buswell and Andrew Smith MP discuss the Mobile Homes Act*

OXFORD East MP Andrew Smith visited a residential park in the city last week, to find out about the impact that the newly passed Mobile Homes Act 2013 will have on residents.

Along with Oxford City councillor Mary Clarkson, Mr Smith visited St Nicholas Park in Old Marston where 50 homes are owned by people in or near retirement.

The act came into force last year, and is designed to give park residents extra safeguards from a small number of rogue operators.

"Mobile home parks make an important contribution to available accommodation in Oxfordshire," said Mr Smith.

"It was also a pleasure to meet some of the residents, and I will always be pleased to help any park home occupier in my constituency who needs more information about how changes in the law affect them."

The visit was arranged by Katy Buswell, whose family owns four residential parks in the Oxford area.

She believes that the legislation has come at an appropriate time as demand for park homes in the city is growing, and that residents should be able to buy such properties with long-term of peace of mind.

Ms Buswell said: "What we are offering is a semi-sheltered environment where residents live among people of a similar age and background – and which is, above all, affordable.

"There is a positive community atmosphere on our parks and a strong sense of neighbourliness, which many mature couples say is missing from modern urban living."

She also acknowledged that a few park operators do not meet the high standards of management and care that is shown by most business owners.

At the moment there are approximately 200,000 people across the UK who live in residential parks, and the new act provides powers to prosecute owners who harass residents.

The visit comes after Henley MP John Howell made a similar visit to Wick Farm Park in Headington, also owned by Ms Buswell, to discuss the act earlier this month.

Cops continue appeal over exposure

• *Have you seen him?*

CCTV images of a man who may be able to help with a three-year-old police enquiry have been re-released.

Thames Valley Police hope the man pictured can assist officers with regard to an indecent exposure in August 12, 2011.

At 5.15pm a man exposed himself to a female staff member in Simply Pleasure in Cowley Road before leaving the shop.

PC Paul Jones, from St Aldates police station, said: "We are appealing to members of the public to identify the man in the CCTV because he might be able to help us with our enquiries."

If you have any information contact PC Jones on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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Sound Advice from Hearingcare

Hearing is one of our most important senses and like eyesight should be looked after.

Hearing is a sense which when lost can isolate people in a world where they fear going out and socialising because they just can't hear and understand. Losing hearing also denies people the joy of the simpler things in life like the birds singing in the trees or communicating with family and friends.

Peta and Keith of Keith Donaghy Hearingcare, based in Witney and Banbury, believe people should treat hearing difficulties as seriously as they would if they had poor eyesight. Keith Donaghy, a qualified hearing aid audiologist for 27 years, travels the length and breadth of the county testing peoples hearing and fitting discreet custom made hearing aids to restore sound to their lives.

The company also offers a comprehensive aftercare service to fine tune and re-adjust the aids to make sure that they are working to the best of their ability and most specifically for each client's needs. Peta, who also works at both centres, said the joy of their profession is seeing people who have not heard properly for sometimes many years cry with joy at simple things. She said "I think that's why my husband does this job"

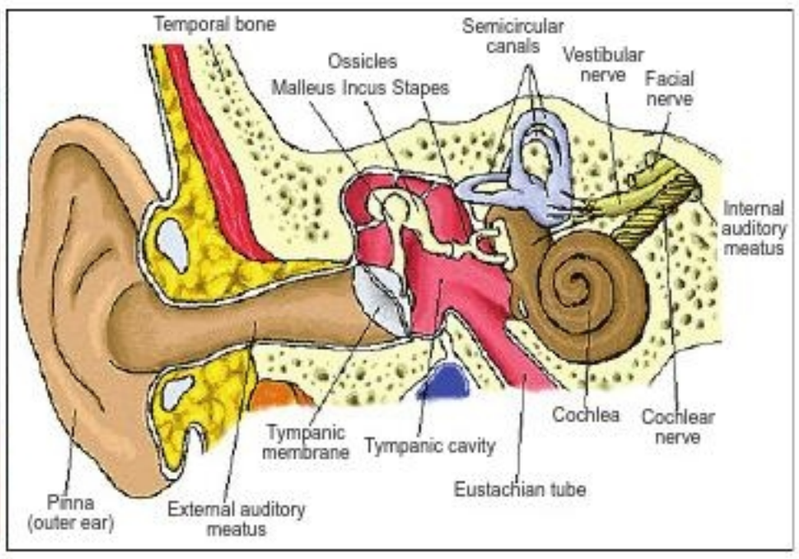
Peta says that when people start losing their hearing they should have it tested as soon as possible. If people have regular hearing checks then problems can be detected earlier rather than later which will help in bringing their hearing back to as near normal as possible with an appropriate hearing aid system.

Hearing aids are so efficient now that they can distinguish between background noise and speech, they can enhance speech thereby making it clearly heard whilst controlling the level of background noise. If people started wearing hearing aids as soon as they had a problem then they would adjust more easily to hearing again. If people wait several years after becoming hard of hearing, then the brain takes a lot longer to adjust.

With age related hearing problems the higher frequency sounds deteriorate first making sounds like the telephone, birdsong, and voices muffled and unclear. Keith Donaghy said that being unable to hear properly can have social implications which can leave people reluctant to go out and socialize. People can stop going to church, going to the pub or on trips as they can't hear or understand and are frightened of mishearing people or missing instructions and important information.

Hearing aids can cost anything up to and over £1000.00 but can last for five years or more. Each aid is individually crafted to fit each person's ear perfectly, they have vents which allow the ears to breathe and are hypoallergenic making them very comfortable to wear.

Peta Donaghy warned prospective customers to be careful about online offers and to consider that "you get what you pay for". She said that Keith Donaghy Hearing care is an independent company and can offer completely impartial advice and an aftercare service that is vital to make sure things run smoothly for the future of the client and their hearing aid system.



Special Offers for January and February

Please bring this advert with you to qualify for these free offers

Free hearing aid batteries for a year on all new hearing aid systems prescribed in January and February.

Free hearing aid spring clean and check on all types of hearing aids.

Keith Donaghy is always happy to discuss with you any hearing problems that you, or a close one, may be experiencing and to share his expertise and knowledge in helping people to hear clearly and concisely.

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Stefano Paolini was runner-up in Channel 4's So You Think You're Funny award in 2001 and in BBC's New Comedy Award in 2002, the impressionist and beat boxer is now a regular on the UK comedy circuit.

On TV he featured regularly on **The Ralph Little Show (BBC Choice)** *and voiced a variety of personalities including, Tony Blair, on* **Double Take (BBC 2)**

Open Spots
These are fairly new comedians that are looking for some practice and stage time.

Jason Simmons

Patrick Lee

Andy Storey

Headline Act

Bob Mills is a true elder statesman of British stand-up comedy. The man who bridged the gap between the first wave of "alternative comedy" in the mid-eighties and the new laddism of the early '90s, star Bob Mills is as popular today as when he first strolled on to the comedy circuit in 1985. Now approaching his silver jubilee as a stand-up comic, Bob is one of the most recognisable and respected comedians in the business. On radio Bob has presented his own shows on **BBC London** and he still regularly covers for Danny Baker. He's also a popular guest on **'Fighting Talk' (BBC Radio 5)** & ***Loose Ends (BBC Radio 4)***.

Please bear in mind that this show will contain strong language and adult humour

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Road deaths 'are lowest for 40 years'

By Jack Johnson
jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

THE number of deaths on our roads is at its lowest for 40 years, Thames Valley Police has confirmed.

However, the force is adamant it will not be complacent in ensuring the roads are a safe place to be.

A total of 57 people died on the region's road network in 55 fatal collisions during 2013, a decrease of more than 25 per cent from 78 fatal collisions in 2012.

Seventeen of the 57 people who died last year were involved in collisions in Oxfordshire.

Chief Inspector Henry Parsons, head of Thames Valley Police Joint Operations Unit for Roads Policing, said: "There are many factors which may have contributed to the reduction in fatal road traffic collisions. Our officers conduct targeted enforcement to both educate and, where appropriate, prosecute offenders.

"Research shows that through targeting key offences such as speed, mobile phone use, not wearing a seatbelt and drink/drug driving, we can make the roads a safer place for everyone who uses them.

"We also run a number of campaigns such as Bike Safe and Safe Drive Stay Alive which are having an impact together with the work we conduct with our partner agencies."

Ch Insp Parsons added: "Our officers will continue to carry out this work 24/7 to continue to reduce the factors which contribute to collisions.

"Too many people continue to die on the roads despite every effort and every one of these figures is a person who has died on the road network and who has not returned home to their loved ones."

Meanwhile, according to figures released by the Office for National Statistics, crime has also fallen in the region.

A total of 131,492 offences were recorded across the Thames Valley between September 2012 and 2013, a reduction of 4.2 per cent compared to the previous year.

The biggest reduction in the Thames Valley was seen in robbery offences, which decreased by 27.7 per cent.

Chief Constable Sara Thornton said: "I am delighted that crime has continued to drop in the Thames Valley.

"I want to thank the officers, staff and volunteers working for Thames Valley Police for all their hard work and also our partners who support the work to make our communities safer.

"We will continue to work towards cutting crime across the three counties over the next 12 months."

Incoming sports shop to create 30 jobs in Oxford

OXFORD will soon be home to a new sports store, creating 30 new jobs.

Decathlon, who first opened a shop in France in 1977, are moving in to a new store at Seacourt Tower Retail Park.

It will open its doors to the public on May 1.

The company's mission is to make sport accessible to all through the provision of high quality goods at affordable prices.

Steve Dykes, Decathlon UK managing director, said: "We're keen to make a real contribution to the community, offering new opportunities for residents, students, families, schools and workers to get involved in sport."

The store will also offer showrooms for cycling, camping and fitness and will be positioned next to Homebase at the retail park.

Store manager, Michael McHale, added: "We're currently recruiting for a number of roles at the new store, from managerial posts to sales assistants, both full and part time.

"I encourage anybody with a passion for sport and a healthy lifestyle to get in touch."

Visit www.decathlon.co.uk for more details about the move.

• *Store manager Michael McHale with Decathlon's operations manager Luke Glackin*

News Bites

Man charged

A MAN has been charged with criminal damage after scratching a police van in Cornmarket Street.

The 23-year-old from Aylesbury was charged on January 18 after he was seen on CCTV damaging the vehicle using a sharp implement.

He was also charged with possession of cannabis and will appear at Oxford Magistrates' Court on February 3.

Play 'n' Teach

PEOPLE of all ages are being invited to a free swimming session to mark the reopening of Bicester's Play 'n' Teach Pool.

Between 10am and 5pm on February 2, visitors can enjoy a host of free swimming activities at the town's leisure centre.

For more information on the open day visit www.leisure-centre.com/bicester or call the centre direct on 01869 253914.

Banbury theft

A TELEVISION and two laptops were stolen from a Banbury home on January 16.

Between 3.30am and 7.21am, offenders gained entry to the house in East Street and stole a 32-inch Toshiba television, a Toshiba C850 laptop and a Toshiba Satellite L300 laptop.

If you have any information call 101.

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Business Bites

Going to the Summit

AN OXFORDSHIRE property specialist is among the speakers at a high profile national conference on High Streets. Commercial agent Neil Wild has been asked to speak at the two-day Future High Street Summit in Leicester in March. He will outline why he believes the traditional landlord-tenant relationship model is no longer suitable for the town centres of the 21st Century, and a new model is needed. The Summit is a platform for retailers, councils, town teams, and business improvement district representatives to share their experiences of projects and activities with a positive impact on their local area. Minister for Local Government and High Streets, Brandon Lewis MP, is among the keynote speakers.

Students told to 'have a go' at careers festival

By **Iain Nicholson**
news@oxfordshireguardian.co.uk

REPRESENTATIVES of 50 businesses and organisations talked careers and job opportunities to Oxfordshire students at the 2014 OCL 'Have a Go' Careers Fest.

Two thousand students aged 14-18 from 18 Oxfordshire schools attended the two day event, hosted by MINI Plant Oxford. Simon Farrall, head of associate and apprentice training at BMW Group UK, said: "We're delighted to be hosting Careers Fest again at MINI Plant Oxford because investment in young people is a key part of our business strategy. This event is a great opportunity for young people to see the wealth of career choices on offer."

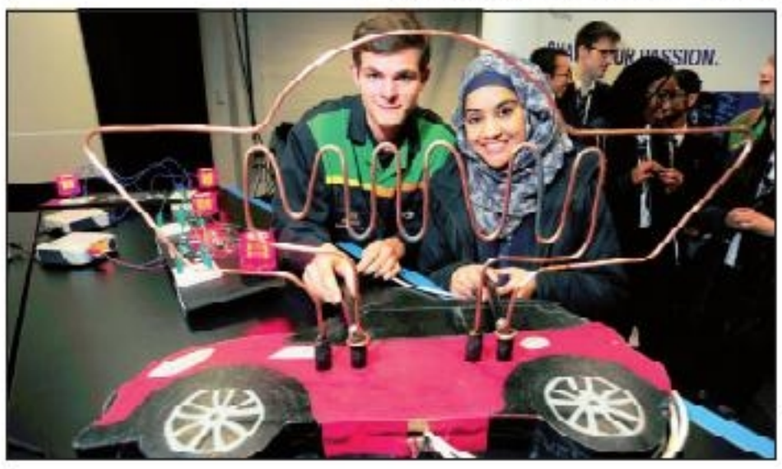
Among the business representatives was Emma Benson, Apprentice Co-ordinator for British Gas. She said: "British Gas is a keen supporter of this careers event as it allows us to showcase our apprenticeship opportunities in the local community. We are passionate about developing local talent through work-based programmes which allow people to earn while they learn."

Leading law firm Blake Lapthorn were among the legal and financial businesses represented. Their Training Manager, Kevin Chard, said: "Careers Fest is a tremendous opportunity to meet with students in the formative years of their career planning, and to enthuse them about the legal sector. We were very impressed with the engagement and enthusiasm of the students we met at Careers Fest 2014."

Now in its 4th year, Careers Fest asked exhibitors to provide information, advice and activities to motivate and inspire young people to understand and consider a full range of opportunities including apprenticeships, further and higher education and employment.

OCL Project Director, Alison Robb-Webb, said: "This year's Year 11 students will need to stay on in education or training until they are 18, rather than 17 as it was last year. To take account of this major change, Careers Fest 2014 put more emphasis on students getting information about the as representatives of the National Careers Service and local careers advisors."

The event showcased key industry sectors from across Oxfordshire including Science, Engineering, Medical and Care Services, Law, Business & ICT, Construction, Hospitality, Retail, Hair & Beauty, Uniformed Services and more. For more information visit www.oxfordcitylearning.org.uk.



• *MINI Apprentice Luke Pearce, joins up with pupil, Zainab Muhmood, 16, from St Gregory the Great Catholic School, on the MINI electrical test.*

Business Matters

Guest comment, David Knowles Leak
Thames Valley regional chair of the Federation of Small Businesses

Federation of small businesses

THE voice of local businesses was heard at a major conference in London this week. The Prime Minister, Senior Cabinet Ministers, a former advisor on small business issues to American President Obama, and leading entrepreneurs came together at the Federation of Small Businesses' (FSB) first Policy Conference.

Recent FSB research shows confidence is on the rise among Thames Valley small businesses, with many looking to grow in 2014. For this growth to be achieved and small firms to fulfil their role in the economy, hurdles such as access to finance, burdensome regulation, and the gap between skills and employability must be overcome.

Small businesses point to the burden of complying with regulation as a major barrier to growth and the work done to cut red tape will help. Importantly Government should ensure when changes are made, they are done properly and with small businesses in mind, and we would encourage it to look at how tax administration is regulated, as this area places the biggest burden on small firms.

There is more to be done, and highlighting how Government will help increase banking competition is vital as is increasing government procurement contracts going to small firms.

We are delighted the Prime Minister could address our Conference and highlight the recognition placed on the long-term economic security small firms provide. It is an historic moment for the FSB and the UK's millions of small businesses.

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Entertainment

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We will see how this goes!

Tac-au-Tac

OXFORD-BASED troupe Tac-au-Tac Dance showcase their new work from over the past year, with performances at the Pegasus Theatre on Saturday and Sunday.

Entitled 'The Storm', the show looks at what it would be like to witness a storm arrive, be trapped in it and then the aftermath after it has gone.

Performances take place at 4pm and 7.30pm on Saturday, and at 4pm on Sunday. For booking details, call 01865 812150 or go to www.pegasus-theatre.org.uk.

Dan Le Sac

DAN Le Sac vs Scroobius Pip come to the O2 Academy this evening, as they prepare for the release of their debut album 'Repent Replenish Repeat'.

The show promises a combination of poetry, electro beats and an amalgam of genres ranging from punk to Motown. Go to www.o2academyoxford.co.uk for more details.

By **Adam Flinn**
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

GLASGOW alternative rock band Del Amitri come to Oxford on Wednesday, performing a range of their music from the last 30 years since the band's formation.

They were formed in 1983 by singer-songwriter Justin Currie and guitarist Iain Harvie, and have released four top-10 albums and numerous hit singles.

The three albums 'Waking Hours' (1989), 'Change Everything' (1992) and 'Twisted' (1995) were re-released on January 20, ready for their latest tour over the next couple of weeks.

Iain said: "We're going to play a selection of songs, and we'll try and start very early from late 1982 when we were young.

"There are one or two songs we are going to try in rehearsals, so we should be able to play something from all of the five albums."

It has been several years since Del Amitri last performed as a group, and both Justin and Iain have been concentrating on their solo work.

• *Iain Harvie (left) and Justin Currie perform at the New Theatre on Wednesday*

While they have no plans as yet for a new album, it's not something that the group have ruled out.

Iain said: "We don't plan at the moment to record a new album, but it might be something we do in the future. We'll see how this goes.

"For now we're just making sure we can play all these songs properly! We've got about 60 songs to learn."

Iain is currently living in Oxford, where he has been for the last five years, and is looking forward to playing in the city.

"It's my home-town for the moment," Iain added. "Glasgow's my home-town and that's going to be a big show, but there'll be a whole set of people in Oxford that know me, probably in a different capacity!"

Wednesday's show takes place at the New Theatre, and starts off at 7pm. To book, go to www.newtheatreoxford.org.uk or phone 0844 871 3020.

A bit Simon Jay?

THE unique one-man play Is He a Bit Simon Jay? comes to the Old Fire Station on Saturday, bringing together character comedy and narrative drama for the show.

It tells the tragic tale of Simon Reuben Jay, from his birth in 1931 to his death last year, told from the perspectives of dozens of people he met along the way.

Tickets cost £9, and the show begins at 7.30pm.

Alan Ayckbourn

PLAYWRIGHT Alan Ayckbourn comes to the Oxford Playhouse tomorrow, for a talk about his work that has been performed at venues around the world.

It is followed from Monday by the Ayckbourn Ensemble, featuring performances of his new play 'Arrivals and Departures', as well as 'Time of My Life' and 'Farcicals'. More details about the talk or any of the plays can be found at www.oxfordplayhouse.com

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30 years of winter touring

Shappi in town

POPULAR comic Shappi Khorsandi returns to the county with a performance at Banbury's Mill Arts Centre tomorrow night, after previously starring in Oxford in November.

She is best known for her television work on shows including 'Have I Got News For You' and 'Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow', but is highly regarded for her stand-up gigs as well.

Tickets cost £14 and the show starts at 8pm. To book, call 01295 297002 or go to www.themillartscentre.co.uk.

On the case

DIDCOT'S Cornerstone arts centre is host to Suitcase Stories, a children's show about a suitcase and all the tales it can tell from its journeys around the world, on Sunday afternoon.

The multi-sensory production uses music, projection, installation and puppetry to tell the story, and is suitable for ages four to eight. Go to www.cornerstone-arts.org for more information.

By **Adam Flinn**
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

FOLK rock favourites Fairport Convention are back in Oxford on Tuesday, as they celebrate their 30th consecutive winter tour by visiting 31 venues across the UK.

The winter tours in their current format began in 1985, and features the line-up of Simon Nicol, Dave Pegg, Ric Sanders, Chris Leslie and Gerry Conway.

Fairport Convention was formed back in 1967, and continue to attract big audiences through touring and their annual Cropredy Festival in North Oxfordshire.

"We're really looking forward to going on the road again," said Simon. "This will be our 30th winter tour in its present guise.

"A few of the venues are new to us but most are places we've been back to frequently; in fact, we've played a couple of them 29 times!

"The band started out in 1967 so our next big anniversary will be Fairport's Golden Jubilee in 2017.

"But even after nearly 50 years on the road, we still look forward to playing in front of audiences.

"Although we regularly record new albums, our first love will always be live performance."

In the latest tour, Fairport will be performing songs from their extensive back catalogue, as well as music from the latest album 'By Popular Request'.

There will also be some brand new material from previously unperformed songs, in preparation for the band's next studio album.

The concerts will also open with a short solo set from singer-songwriter Edwina Hayes, who has worked with Jools Holland, Nanci Griffith and Roger McGuinn in the past, as well as many others.

Tuesday's performance at St John the Evangelist Church is scheduled to start at 7.30pm, and tickets cost £20.

For more information and booking details, phone the box office on 01865 613502 or go to www.sje-oxford.org.

• *Fairport Convention celebrate 30 years of touring at St John the Evangelist Church on Tuesday*

Son Yambu

CUBAN music specialists Son Yambu are in Chipping Norton on Saturday night, fusing Spanish and African rhythms that originated in the streets of eastern Cuba.

The group play authentic 'Son Cubano', and features a new generation of Cuban musicians that are passionate about maintaining the genre.

It starts at 7.45pm, and tickets cost £14. Go to www.chippingnortontheatre.co.uk.

Tony Stockwell

PSYCHIC medium Tony Stockwell comes to Henley's Kenton Theatre this evening, as he demonstrates his belief that those who have passed can communicate with friends and family.

Tony has been working as a medium for 20 years, and has appeared on countless television programmes and set up his own training school for developing mediums.

Tonight's show starts at 7.30pm, and tickets cost £19. Go to www.kentontheatre.co.uk.

Fri 7 March Lucy Porter
Fri 21 March Richard Herring
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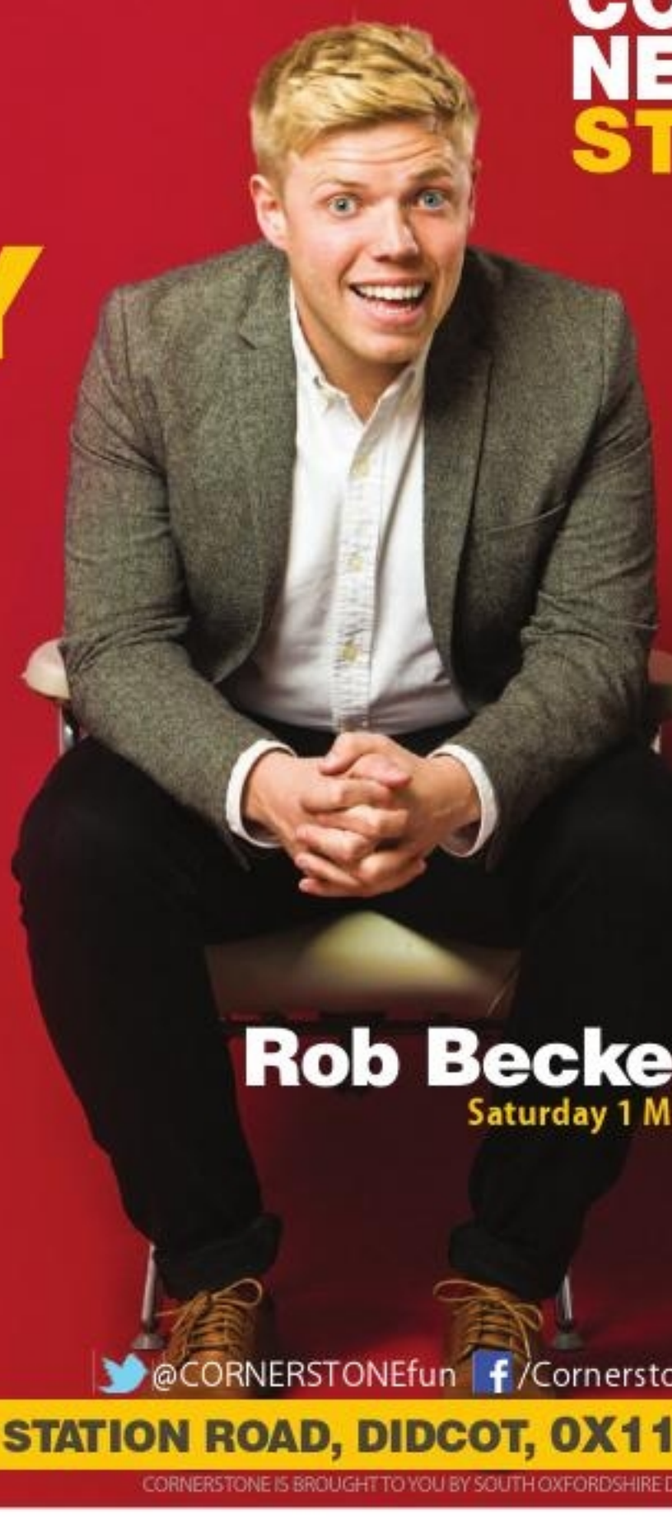
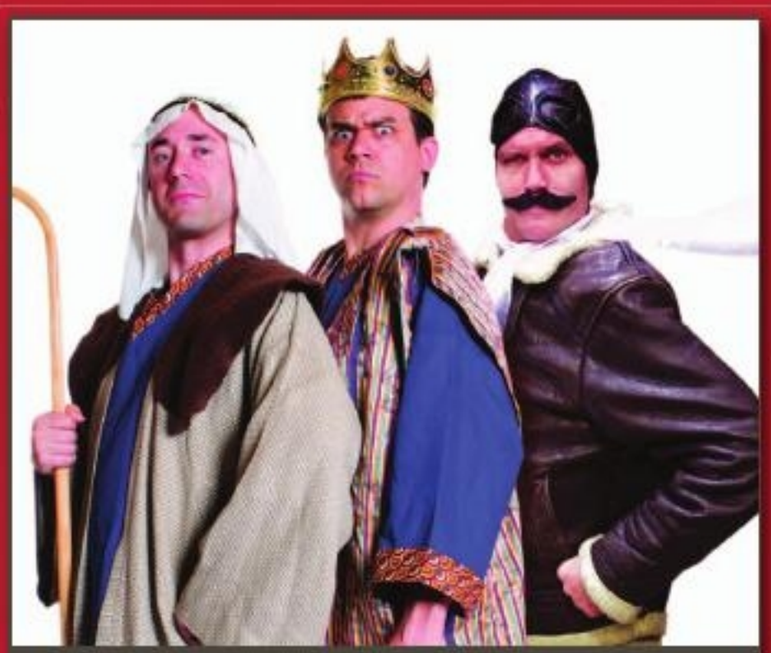


Rob Beckett
Saturday 1 March



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31 Jan - 28 Feb, 11am - 6am
Office of Contemporary Chinese Art
OPTIMISM: YUAN DINGMEI & CAI YUAN LIVE PERFORMANCE EXHIBITION
"OPENING PERFORMANCE: Friday, January 31, 6-8pm
EXHIBITION PROJECT: February 1-28, 2014
OCCA, the Oxford-based Office of Contemporary Chinese Art, is pleased to announce a month-long collaborative project with artists Yingmei Duan and Cai Yuan, supported by Arts Council England. OPTIMISM is an interdisciplinary exhibition project by two established artists each of whom has developed a distinctive practice over a number of years working with a variety of media.
The project combines drawing, writing and performance and will take place from 31st January to 28th February 2014 in the OCCA Gallery on 11, St. Clements Street, Oxford, OX4 1AB.
www.occa-art.com

1 Feb, 7:29pm - 11pm
Jacqueline du Pré Music Building
MASH MARATHON
The annual M@SH Marathon returns, bringing its unique brand of innovative music-making to the JdP.
www.st-hildas.ox.ac.uk/jdp 01865 286660

1 Feb, 9am - 11am
Abingdon Baptist Church Hall
JUMBLE SALE AND CAKE STALL
Jumble, clothes, books, DVD's, toys, games, puzzles, bric-a-brac. home made cakes. In aid of the 30th Abingdon Scout Group funds. Ock Street, Abingdon.
01235 527828

2 Feb, 3pm
Henley Town Hall
ALLEN DIGITAL THEATRE ORGAN - JEAN MARTYN
£7 concessions £6.50
www.henleyorgantrust.org.uk

2 Feb
Orchard Centre, Didcot
DIDCOT SUNDAY MARKET: VALENTINES GIFTS/ OXON VEG CYCLE SEED & BULB SWAP

3 Feb - 8 Feb
Oxford Playhouse
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3 Feb - 3 Mar, 10am - 6pm
Aidan Meller Gallery, 105 High Street, Oxford
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www.aidanmeller.com

3 Feb - 3 Mar
Aidan Meller Gallery 14 Broad Street, Oxford
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6 Feb, 8pm - 9pm
The North Wall, Oxford
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7 Feb - 9 Feb, 11am - 5pm
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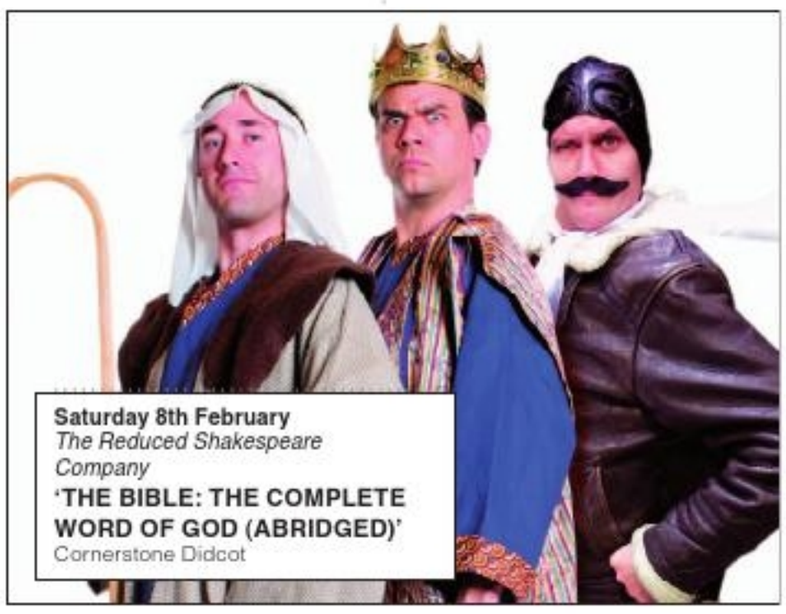

Saturday 8th February
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Horoscopes

By Cassandra Nye

Your life in the stars

AQUARIUS (January 21 - February 19)
Be positive this week. You have already gone through the cons of a situation, so where are the pros? Many take a step back at this time of the year to look at their lives. Don't allow doubt to cloud your enjoyment. Look back to times when you were successful but did not expect to be. Check your diet and get out into the fresh air to revive your spirit. .

PISCES (February 20 - March 20)
What starts out as a quiet week can have stunning consequences! The smallest efforts on your part should give great satisfaction. This could be the right time to try something different and even challenging. You may not feel that there is much to plan for, but it is up to you to write your own future. It can be exciting and fun with the right attitude.

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)
Keep that list topped up with all of those bright ideas! They pop in and out of your mind all week and some can be quite worthy. When you see someone about to make a mistake or do something the wrong way, consider your words. It is best to avoid upsetting someone who you may later rely on. Thought that you had dealt with that spiky situation? Tie up those loose ends!

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)
The spirit of adventure is upon you. Perhaps you will satisfy it by planning an unusual holiday or weekend trip. If it is deeper rooted, thoughts may be on a move of a more permanent nature. Either way, there is an air of excitement about you. At work you may be the stabilising influence when others start to get carried away with an idea. In charge? Then show it.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Finances and shared resources seem to be taking up a lot of your time. No doubt this is necessary to maintain a balance. Even so, relax a bit mid-week to avoid burnout! You know what they say about 'all work and no play'! A fresh start in the business area of your life may be slow at first but there is little to be done about it. To rush could mean making mistakes.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Although you are determined to work to improve your friendships, do realise that each person needs a different approach. Humour will work better with family than with work colleagues, who may be a little more straight-laced. When working with someone else's money, be aware that they have more knowledge than you may give them credit for. Conversations can be passionate.

LEO (July 24 - August 23)
A patchwork week sees you trying to balance work, health, love and family. Put off what you need to, but make sure it's not health-related. Checks are not just there to reassure you but also to reassure others. Mid-week you are left in no doubt that you are loved. Would the weekend be a good time to show how much you appreciate that? Perhaps a reaction is long overdue.

VIRGO (August 24 - September 23)
Ask for what you want this week and there is a fair chance of you getting it. Of course, if you are not sure what you want, you cannot ask for a blank cheque! Showing enthusiasm for some action in the future may be enough to keep someone interested. Show yourself in your best light, especially physically. People may take you very much on face value.

LIBRA (September 24 - October 23)
In your enthusiastic manner, it is possible that you are going down the wrong track on a business matter. Check the pros and cons before committing yourself. In a week that lacks energy, make any adjustments to your diet and exercise. This redresses the balance. What works for you may not work for others. To avoid any disputes, try to be flexible.

SCORPIO (October 24 - November 22)
Be practical when it comes to current set-ups. Be these domestic or business, give them an overhaul. This can save both time and money but, even more than that, it can save you a whole batch of frustrations later! The easy way right now may not be the best way. Be decisive when it comes to love. People need to know where they stand.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 - December 21)
On some days it seems that you have a long way to go to realise your dreams. As a ship in the doldrums, you just have to be patient. When the wind does fill your sails you will be glad that you had this time to think. Use your instincts when it comes to a romantic liaison. If it feels right, then the chances are that it could be so. Give someone the benefit of your time.

CAPRICORN (December 22 - January 20)
The way that you present yourself and your ideas this week is important. If you were going for that new haircut or suit, do it. Unfortunately, you could be judged by your appearance rather than your talents. That's annoying, certainly, but it should be mentioned. Be clear about where you stand on a romantic level. Do you really want someone to get the wrong idea?

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Advertising Feature

Valentines

Put a smile on his face this Valentine's Day

WHILE Valentine's Day is traditionally reserved for romance, there are plenty of people who believe the celebration has become too commercial.

However, a little frivolity and fun can reduce the stress placed on buying gifts for a loved one, allowing you to find the perfect gift for your partner easily and show you are still a romantic at heart deep down.

Hunting for a Valentine's Day card for a man can be difficult, particularly if you are keen to find something that has meaning to you both but isn't soppy or covered in kisses and kittens.

One simple way round this issue is to create personal Valentine's Day cards ahead of February 14.

Instead of desperately trying to create something that epitomises your feelings for your special man, simply pick something that will make him laugh or smile and save the heartfelt romantic gesture for the message inside the card.

The simplest thing can add a personal touch and mark a normal card or present out as something special.

It might just be something that you don't immediately realise until you take a second glance and it is this quality that makes them such amazing gifts.

A present for a loved one doesn't need to be awe-inspiring, it just has to be interesting and most importantly, heartfelt.

In fact some men are a great deal more romantic than the ladies, but that all depends on the man. Not all men would appreciate football-themed personalised Valentine's Day cards, just as not all women appreciate cuddly toy-themed cards.

The idea of personalised cards is that you use them to your advantage and choose a theme or design that is perfectly suited to the person they are intended for, whether that is male or female. When it comes to Valentine's Day, all stereotypes should be left aside and the individual kept in mind at all times.

Anyone's intention on Valentines Day is to make that special someone in their lives smile. It doesn't matter how you do this, whether it is through comedy, romance, or old-fashioned cheesy salutations. Just as long as you do something to create that smile, it doesn't matter what road you take to get there.

There are many themes that are very well suited to male recipients. There are the more obvious football and other sports themes, that can of course be personalised to your precise needs. Then there are other suitable themes such as music, or musical instruments.

There are even some personalised Valentine's Day cards that are a little more risqué, such as French Maid design cards, with the man's name written in the stockings. Such a card is guaranteed to be an ideal gift to make any man smile.

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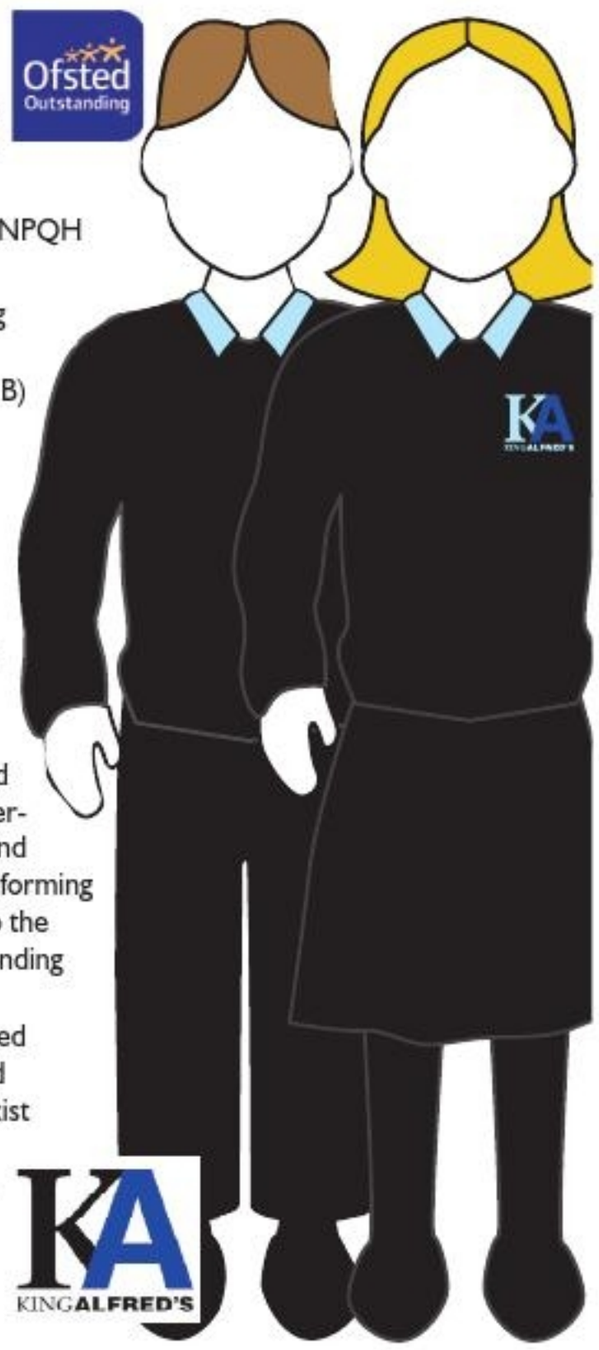

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Curriculum Two year Key Stage 3 followed by three year Key Stage 4, allowing for a personalised curriculum to ensure students remain focused and motived throughout their studies and every individual achieves to the best of their potential.
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School's Philosophy The Academy's continued success is centred on outstanding teaching and learning and the excellent relationships that exist between students, staff, parents and our community. King Alfred's believes that active learning is the key to academic success, along with the breadth of educational opportunities offered beyond the classroom.
www.kaacademy.org

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DIDCOT GIRLS' SCHOOL

Manor Crescent, Didcot, Oxfordshire. OX11 7AJ
01235 812092 headteacher@didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk
Head Teacher Mrs R Warwick MA Oxon, NPQH
Sex of pupils Girls (11-16), Mixed (16-18)
A dynamic and exciting school well on its way to being outstanding in all areas. We are an all girls' secondary school with a mixed sixth form, Didcot Sixth Form College, run in partnership with St Birinus School. . Last year's GCSE results place us in the top performing state schools in the county with over 70% 5A*-C inc English and Maths and 25% of students gaining 5 or more A and A* grades. Record A level results at all levels in 2013.
Curriculum: Students study for three years for GCSE qualifications, building independent learning skills, following a two year Key Stage 3 (Yrs 7 & 8). Students are able to study Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, French and German to A level and results in this largely traditional curriculum are excellent with E-Bacc achievement very high year on year. The Ulysses Group is offered for gifted and talented students in Key Stage 4 feeding into the Russell Group in the sixth form: over 30% of students achieved places at Russell Group universities last summer.
Extra Curricular: We foster a love of learning through a rich and high quality range of extra-curricular trips, clubs and activities. Students are able to travel China, Spain, France, Germany and Sweden each year. Of particular note, our Science Clubs have excellent links with Oxford University and our sports and performing arts provision is exceptional.
School's Philosophy: We are committed to developing leadership skills in girls through our bespoke Leadership Ladder and a vibrant House system. We offer a happy and inclusive school and a strong community ethos. All girls' education enables our students to develop confidence, resilience and exceptionally high levels of aspiration. We aspire to excellence in all that we do.
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KINGHAM HILL SCHOOL

Kingham, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 6TH
01608 658999 secretary@kingham-hill.oxon.sch.uk
www.kingham-hill.oxon.sch.uk
Head Teacher Mr N. Seward
Sex of pupils Boys and Girls **Age of pupils** 11-18
Founded 1886
Mission Our Mission is to... Provide an excellent all-round education within a distinctively Christian context. We welcome talented pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances, and aim to produce young people of vision, faith, and character, who are well-qualified and equipped to flourish in their adult lives.
Entrance Requirement We accept pupils of average ability and better. Very able pupils benefit from the specialist input of Octagon, our academic society. All pupils receive just the right balance of challenge and encouragement to help them reach their full academic potential.
Campus Most first time visitors to the school experience the 'wow' factor as they turn into our grounds and make their way along the main drive. We are surrounded by our stunning 96 acre site and delightful rolling Cotswold countryside. We also lie just a short walk from Kingham, 'England's favourite village'.
Extra-curricular We recognise that there is more to life than academic study. Kingham Hill has open access to a whole range of activities both on campus and further afield, which enhances the all-round development of our pupils. These include a wide range of clubs and many other occasional recreational opportunities.
We also encourage our pupils to get involved in community service, charity work and charity fundraising.

KINGHAM HILL SCHOOL

School life

Advertising promotion

Picking the correct school is vital for the future of your offspring

WALLINGFORD SCHOOL

Wallingford School, St George's Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 8HH
01491 837 115 head.4140@wallingfordschool.com
Head Teacher Mr N. J. Willis
Sex of pupils Boys and girls **Age** 11-18 years

Wallingford was the highest attaining state school in Oxfordshire at GCSE in 2012 and 2013. Last year our students achieved 76% 5A* - C with English (80%) and mathematics (81%). Our value added score puts us in the top 4% nationally. Our boys would finish third equal in the county on their own, while the girls secured a tremendous 83% 5A*-C with English and maths. Most impressive is the outstanding progress of our students, from the lower ability to the very high achieving. This is remarkable for a school that accepts all students regardless of academic profile, income, gender or faith.

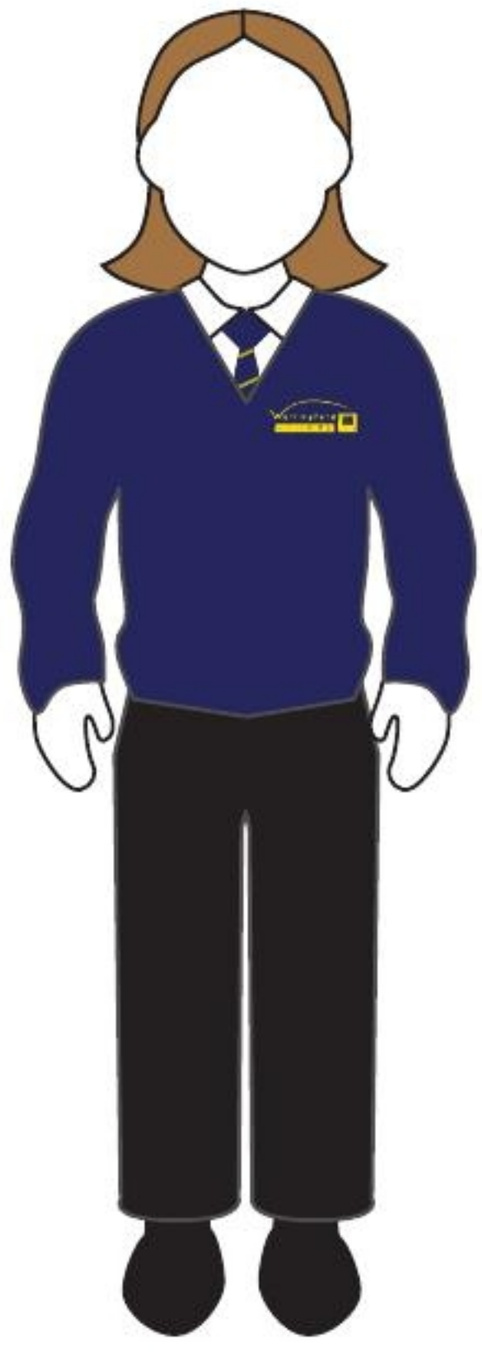
Year on year our Sixth Form value added results place us in the top 25% of the country for students studying pure A Levels and for those combining them with vocational courses. Our results are particularly strong in the more rigorous 'facilitating' subjects and every student applying to university on results day is successful.

Our curriculum has always been centred upon a traditional academic offer, supplemented with vocational courses where appropriate. There is very strong support for our gifted students, running from induction to university entry, detailed in a bespoke prospectus. There is also a separate publication for those who experience difficulty learning.

Extra-curricular The extra-curricular offer is extensive. It ranges from clubs and teams in the school week, through day trips to longer residential visits to places in the UK and Europe, with the expeditions to places like Borneo and Nicaragua at the more adventurous end. We also offer the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Mission Our aim is to send everyone into the world able and qualified to play their full part. We do not employ any eye-catching strategies or unique structures. We do the simple things well, through very hard work indeed. The real achievement of the staff is that they have created a high-performing school while keeping a happy, warm atmosphere. We think this is because of a real love of teaching and learning, allied to clear boundaries for behaviour. Working and studying at Wallingford is a real privilege; one we earn through hard work and respect for each other. Young people thrive here.

Wallingford SCHOOL 1659



Prep list: Do's and don'ts for parents

• Start planning early

Choose the secondary school or schools you would like your child to attend and work backwards: which is the best pre-prep or nursery, prep or primary school to get there? Choose a school that suits your child, not your ambitions.

• Do your homework

Learn about prospective schools for your child and visit, visit, visit. You should be looking seriously by the time your child is eight or nine years old.

• Get involved

Take an interest in what your child is learning and make yourself familiar with the types of tests set by schools. But don't bore your child to death – they can't spend all evening doing practice papers.

• Prepare your child

Prepare your child for interview but beware of coaching. If you do, your child may come out with something painful, like: "Mummy and Daddy told me to say I was a perfectionist."

• Consider tutoring

Think about hiring a private tutor if, say, your child is going for entrance to an independent day school or grammar school. But don't turn your child's life into a miserable round of nonstop coaching.

• Stay calm

Do not convey the stress you feel to your child, particularly at exam time. Your attitude should be that your child is applying to three or four wonderful schools and you would be happy with any of them.

What schools must publish on their website

Schools must put on their website: how much money they get from taking underprivileged children (the 'pupil premium'), what they do with it and the effect it's had

· details of the curriculum
· admission criteria
· behaviour policy
· special educational needs policy
· policy on disability
· links to Ofsted reports
· links to performance data
· the school's latest Key Stage 2 and 4 attainment and progress measures

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La Bohème
at the Royal Albert Hall

Saturday departutes, 1 & 8 March 2014

No opera can equal the captivating romance and heartfelt tragedy of Puccini's La bohème. With its real characters and powerful emotion, this story of doomed love contains some of Puccini's finest music. Accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and staged fully in-the-round, this production transforms the iconic Royal Albert Hall into 1940s Paris.

- Overnight stay at a choice of 4 star London hotels with full English breakfast
- A Circle ticket with a face value of £36 for the Saturday evening performance of La Bohème at the Royal Albert Hall (ticket upgrades to Choir or Stalls are offered at a supplement of £10 and £30)
- Free time in London
- Return standard class rail travel to London from Oxford

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Classical Spectacular
at the Royal Albert Hall

Departing Saturday 22 March 2014

The UK's most popular classical music extravaganza returns to the Royal Albert Hall in March with a programme combining the very best in popular classical music with stunning visual accompaniment and dazzling special effects, bringing to life the scenes and moods evoked by each glorious piece.

- Overnight stay at a choice of 4 star London hotels with full English breakfast
- A Choir ticket with a face value of £23.50 for an evening performance of Classical Spectacular at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday 22 March 2014. (Upgrades available)
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Dolly Parton
at the O2 Arena

Departing Friday 27 June 2014

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- 2 nights stay at a choice of 4 star London hotels with full English breakfast
- A ticket to see Dolly Parton at the O2 Arena on Saturday evening
- Free time in London
- Return standard class rail travel to London from Oxford

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Departing Friday 18 July 2014

3 days by **RAIL**, from **£259.95pp**

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Monty Python first hit our screens with the Flying Circus, which saw 45 episodes broadcast on the BBC from 1969-1974. The Pythons were an instant success and became the face of British comedy. They went on to achieve overwhelming international acclaim with the huge success of films such as Monty Python and the Holy Grail in 1975, Life of Brian in 1979 and their final film The Meaning of Life in 1983.

- 2 nights stay at a choice of 4 star London hotels with full English breakfast
- Level four ticket (£90.60) to Monty Python Live on Friday night or Saturday night at The O2 Arena
- Free time in London for shopping and sightseeing
- Return standard class rail travel to London from Oxford

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Beyoncé at the O2 Arena

Departing Friday 28 February 2014

- 2 nights stay at a choice of **4 star** London hotels with full English breakfast
- Seated ticket with a face value of £93 (including booking fee) for Beyoncé at the O2 Arena on Friday evening
- Free time in London
- Return standard class rail travel to London from Oxford

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Romeo & Juliet at the Royal Albert Hall

Saturday departures 14 & 21 June 2014

- Overnight stay at a choice of **4 star** London hotels with full English breakfast
- A Circle ticket with a face value of £29.50 for the evening performance of Romeo & Juliet at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday (Upgrades available)
- Free time in London
- Return standard class rail travel to London from Oxford

2 days by **Rail**, from **£149.95pp**

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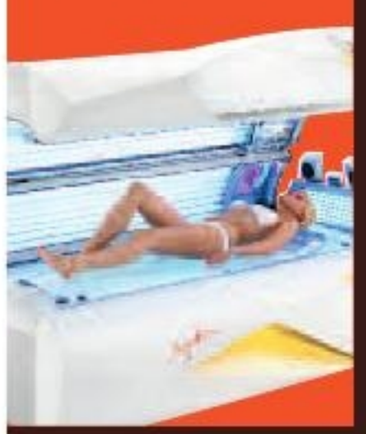

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Green fingers

Advertising Feature

The 'no dig' approach

Taking the spade work out of veg growing

By **Hannah Stephenson**

EACH autumn, there's a collective, nationwide groan as gardeners think about the endless digging they'll be doing over winter to improve their soil's condition for the following year.

But Charles Dowding, renowned market gardener and expert vegetable grower, can offer them some good news.

Over the years, he has conducted many experiments comparing the effect on plant growth of digging with not digging and has found that a 'no-dig' approach is the way to go. It not only saves time and exertion on digging, but also on weeding, because far fewer weeds grow on undisturbed soil.

He insists that growth and quality are improved by simply covering beds with 2.5-5cm (1-2in) of compost over the surface.

"The usual recommendation is to dig or even double dig the soil for growing vegetables," he says. "Because this is repeated so many times, most gardeners accept the task without wondering if it is really necessary. In fact, there is no need to dig at all."

Initial clearance of weedy and grassy ground can mostly be achieved with mulches (such as cardboard and compost) and some digging out of woody plants, then you can maintain the plot by weeding regularly. Surface compost weathers to a soft mulch over winter and can be directly sown or planted into, he adds.

"Soil does not need to be mixed, stirred, scraped or tickled. Only large lumps of organic matter on top require some knocking around with a fork or rake to create an even surface, mostly in winter and spring."

Dowding has run an experiment since 2007 to understand the effect on soil of digging and not digging, comparing growth of the same vegetables growing side by side in dug and undug beds.

"In the absence of digging, I have found that harvests are as high, sometimes higher, while some extra quality of growth on undug soil may be apparent.

"Soil in the undug beds, with compost on its surface, is well-drained, retains more moisture in dry springs and grows fewer weeds and stronger vegetables, especially at the start of the season," he explains in his new book Veg Journal, which offers month-by-month no-dig advice.

A key point in the no-dig approach is that undug soil is firm, which is not the same as compacted; roots have freedom to travel and are well-anchored at the same time.

"Fertility is enhanced by an increase of undisturbed soil life, which mobilises nutrients and helps plant roots to access them," he continues. "This is most noticeable in early spring, when growth on undug soil is generally faster by comparison with dug soil, whose fertility, in terms of soil life, is still recovering from the winter digging."

He says that firm soil is often wrongly labelled as 'compacted', yet soil which has been mechanically loosened and fluffed up is not stable, which is why you have to walk on planks after digging heavy soil to avoid compaction.

Compacted soil is squishy when wet, rock-like when dry, contains few or no worm channels, is hard to crumble in your hand and may smell sulphurous because of lack of oxygen. It usually happens in the top 15-20cm (6-8in) of the surface and if it does, he advises adding plenty of organic matter.

He concludes: "My advice is simple: disturb your soil as little as possible."

• *Charles Dowding raising beds. Raising beds can ease digging. Picture credit: PA Photo/ Handout.*

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Sudoku

Place a number from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each 3x3 block, column, and full row includes each of the numbers from 1 to 9 only once. **EASY/MEDIUM/HARD**

9				6	3			
2		8			1	3		
	6					7	4	1
	3			1	9		2	7
6			8		7			4
8	9		2	5			1	
4	5	9					6	
		3	4			5		8
			1	2				9

1				8				3
	7						6	
		6	9		5	1		
4	6		5		8		3	7
			3		7			
3	9		1		4		8	5
		2	4		9	3		
	4						9	
5				7				2

					3	6		1
				1		2		
						4	9	
	6				9		1	2
9			6		8			5
2	7		4				3	
	5	9						
		4		7				
6		7	8					

Two speed crossword

Quick Clues Across

4 Photographer's apparatus (6)
8 Claws (7)
10 Sinews (7)
11 Disturb (5)
12 Bottles (5)
13 Scent (9)
16 Helper (9)
19 Equipment (5)
20 Gum (5)
22 Sinister (7)
23 Paying attention (7)
24 Most vile (6)

Quick Clues Down

1 Overwhelm (6)
2 Watering places (4)
3 Disturbances (13)
5 Annual commemorations (13)
6 Extreme selfishness (8)
7 Estimate (6)
9 Back (5)
14 Water sports (8)
15 Selfpossession (6)
17 Rip (5)
18 Muddle (6)
21 Nonalcoholic (4)

Cryptic Clues Across

4 Investigated professional plot (6)
8 Stayed the course and finished round the old city (7)
10 Knowledgeable after the finish that's the position (7)
11 It's no joke getting behind at sea (5)
12 Mr Wood, senior, we presume? (5)
13 Getting a rise? (9)
16 Was Robin Hood so bandy, then? (36)
19 What's the wild dog doing? (5)
20 Where one is expected to take steps (5)
22 Classical welcome to the right communist is declared (7)
23 Stumped on the golfcourse (7)
24 Unruly sets I'd stop (6)

Cryptic Clues Down

1 Praise about a former country (6)
2 Lied about being out of work (4)
3 They provide a firm basis for pressing matters (7,6)
5 Holidays somehow delayed RollsRoyce test (36,4)
6 Fifty in the band are dazzling (8)
7 Dry out the organ dull (6)
9 She could be an ideal girl (5)
14 Risks about a pound in church (8)
15 He somehow drew with the District Attorney (6)
17 Presumably *you* don't mind if they are cross (5)
18 Is in awe of many mad dares (6)
21 It can take a hammering (4)

Scribble space

Last week's solutions

8	3	7	4	6	5	9	2	1
1	5	6	2	3	9	7	4	8
9	2	4	7	1	8	3	5	6
2	4	1	6	8	3	5	9	7
3	9	8	5	7	2	1	6	4
6	7	5	1	9	4	8	3	2
4	1	2	3	5	7	6	8	9
7	8	3	9	4	6	2	1	5
5	6	9	8	2	1	4	7	3

1	4	9	8	2	3	6	5	7
6	5	7	1	4	9	8	2	3
8	2	3	6	5	7	1	4	9
4	9	8	2	3	6	5	7	1
2	3	6	5	7	1	4	9	8
5	7	1	4	9	8	2	3	6
3	6	5	7	1	4	9	8	2
9	8	2	3	6	5	7	1	4
7	1	4	9	8	2	3	6	5

7	9	6	3	5	4	2	8	1
5	8	4	7	1	2	6	3	9
3	2	1	9	6	8	7	4	5
4	1	8	2	9	6	5	7	3
2	5	3	4	8	7	1	9	6
9	6	7	1	3	5	4	2	8
1	7	5	8	2	9	3	6	4
6	4	9	5	7	3	8	1	2
8	3	2	6	4	1	9	5	7

Quick Crossword

Across: 1 Occupations 9 Peg 10 Introduce 11 Class 13 Scarabs 14 Argosy 16 Beggar 18 Imagine 19 Reach 20 Trampling 21 Map 22 Celebrating

Down: 2 Cog 3 Units 4 Attest 5 Iron age 6 Neuralgia 7 Specialists 8 Censorships 12 Aggravate 15 Stipple 17 Senior 19 Right 21 Men

Cryptic Crossword

Across: 1 Paper-hanger 9 Rum 10 Centipede 11 Impel 13 Sponges 14 Ghosts16 Veneer 18 Harries 19 Ounce 20 Machinate 21 Oat 22 Asseverates

Down: 2 Aim 3 Excel 4 Honest 5 Noisome 6 Evergreen 7 Crying shame 8 Sea-serpents 12 Protracts 15 Thin ice 17 Estate 19 Opera 21 Ore

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New Mazda5 is quirky, but practical, and an engaging drive

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WITH its seven-seater versatility, and intelligent packaging, the Mazda5 has been engineered from the ground up to meet the demands of even the most active families.

Like its predecessor, launched in 2005, this second generation model competes with cars such as the Ford Grand C-Max, Citroën C4 Grand Picasso and Peugeot 5008.

Mini-van looks ensure that the Mazda5 stands out in the medium-sized MPV crowd and although it lacks the panache and class of some rivals, the

REVIEW: Mazda5

By **Philip Shoulder**

@writeonmotoring

5's interior feels well-made. There's lots of adjustment for the seat and steering wheel, so drivers shouldn't struggle to get comfy either.

Equipment levels are generous and include six airbags, Dynamic Stability Control (DSC) with Traction Control System (TCS), two ISOFIX child seat anchor points, reversing camera, climate control, cruise control, TomTom satellite navigation and six-speaker audio system with USB port. This high-spec Venture also benefits from new sporty Black cloth trim with red stitching and an auto-dimming rear-view mirror.

The Mazda5's large twin sliding rear doors – a rare feature in this class - offer impressive access in even the tightest spaces and there's a 130mm foot step and low 439mm step-up into the cabin… perfect for school runs and family outings.

Inside the Mazda5 boasts impressive versatility, too – even though the accommodation is more six-and-a-half, rather than a full seven-seater - as the centre rear seat is only suitable for smaller children. However, the three rows create a wide range of passenger-luggage combinations. The 112-litre loadbay in seven-seat mode can be enlarged to 426-litres in five-seat configuration, while folding all five rear seats flat using Mazda's unique Karakuri seat-folding system creates a ceiling loadbay of 1485-litres (floor to roof).

The Mazda5 range is available with the choice of two engines: a 115ps 1.6-litre turbo diesel and a 2.0-litre petrol delivering 150ps - tested here.

Utilising the firm's 'i-stop' stop/start system allows this petrol engine to return a combined fuel economy of 40.9mpg with CO2 emissions of 159g/km – respectable enough given the size of vehicle, although some rivals are more frugal.

On-paper performance isn't anything to write home about with a 0-62mph time of 11 seconds and a 120mph top speed. But if the driver is willing to work the engine, they're rewarded with decent progress and a sporty soundtrack – which accompanied by impressive agility, good body control, direct steering and slick six-speed manual transmission – makes the Mazda5 surprisingly good fun to drive.

Refinement is perhaps one of the car's weaker areas, with that vocal engine and noticeable road and wind noise even at moderate speeds. However, comfort is good thanks to supportive seats and a pliant and settled ride.

Lots of windows make for good visibility and combined with the car's easy controls, results in the 5 being an absolute doddle to drive and park in towns and congested areas.

Verdict:

From some angles it looks a bit quirky, but the Mazda5 combines great all-round family practicality with a sharp and engaging drive.

Facts at a glance

- Price: £19,995
- 0-62mph 11.0 seconds
- Top speed: 120 mph
- Power: 150PS @6200 rpm
- Torque: 191Nm @ 4500 rpm
- Claimed economy: 40.9 mpg (combined)
- CO2 159g/km
- Insurance group: 16E

• *The new Mazda5*

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Mazda range: urban 25.4-56.5 (11.1-5), extra urban 45.6-76.3 (6.2-3.7), combined 35.3-67.3 (8-4.2). Official CO2 188-110g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

Models shown: Mazda 2 SE Air-con, On the road price: £10,995. Mazda MX-5 Soft top SE 1.8 Petrol, On the road price: £18,495. Mazda 5 Venture 2.0 150PS Petrol On the road price: £19,994. Retail sales only, subject to vehicle availability for vehicles registered between 02.01.14 and 31.03.14 at participating dealers. T&C apply. *0% finance available on Mazda 5, MX-5, Mazda 2 with no minimum deposit on Mazda Personal Contract Purchase. At the end of the agreement there are 3 options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle, where equity is available, (ii) Retain: Pay the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (iii) Return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition of the vehicle. Finance subject to status. 18s or over. Guarantee/Indemnity may be required. Mazda Financial Services RH1 1SR. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers. We may receive a commission from them for the introduction. OTR price includes VAT, number plates, delivery, 12 months' road fund licence, first registration fee, 3 year or 60,000 mile warranty and 3 years' European roadside assistance. Test drives subject to applicant status and availability. Not available in conjunction with any other offer unless specified. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, e.g. if list price changes. Registered Name: Johnsons Cars Ltd, Registered Office: Empire Court, Albert Street, Redditch B97 4DA. United Kingdom. Registration No. 3710700 VAT Registration No. GB927551006.

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Mazda6 range: Urban 36.2 (7.8) - 60.1 (4.7), Extra Urban 57.6 (4.9) - 83.1 (3.4), Combined 47.9 (5.9) - 72.4 (3.9). CO_2 emissions (g/km) 136 - 104.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results obtained through laboratory testing. These are provided for comparability purposes only and may not reflect your actual driving results.

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Fuel consumption figures for Civic Tourer 1.6 i-DTEC SE Plus in mpg (l/100km): Urban 67.3 (4.2), Extra Urban 78.5 (3.6), Combined 74.3 (3.8). CO_2 emissions: 99g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

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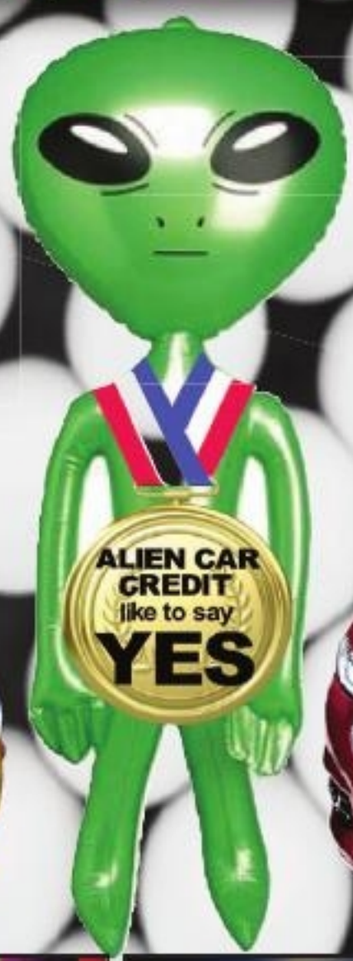

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2007-07	FORD FOCUS 1.8 TDCI TITANIUM, Black, 5 Dr, RCL, PAS, EW, AC, Alloys, 76900 Miles	£4,995
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2010-60	CITROEN C1 VT 1.0, Red, 5 Dr, PAS, Dual Air bags, £20 a Year Road Tax, 23740 Miles	£4,795
2009-59	TOYOTA AYGO 1.0 VVT, Red, 3 Dr, PAS, Driver & Passenger Airbag, CD Player, 29370 Miles	£4,795
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2010-10	RENAULT TWINGO 1.2 FREEWAY, Blue, 3 Dr, RCL, PAS, EW, 29000 Miles	£3,995
2006-56	VAUXHALL TIGRA 1.4 EXCLUSIV, Blue, 2 door Convertible, RCL, PAS, EW, Leather Seats, CD PLAYER, Alloys, 48000 Miles	£3,995
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2005-55	TOYOTA YARIS 1.3 T-SPIRIT AUTO, Black, 5 dr, RCL, PAS, EW, AC, Sunroof, Alloys, 79500 Miles	£3,995
2008-08	CITROEN C1 VIBE, Red, 3 Dr, PAS, Dual Air Bags, £20 Road tax, Grp 1 Ins, 38600 Miles	£3,995
2007-07	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 LIFE, Blue, 5 Dr, RCL, PAS, EW, AC, 7 Seats, 60700 Miles	£3,995
2005-55	VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.2 E, Silver, 5 Dr, CL, PAS, Dual Air Bags, 60900 Miles	£3,795
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2007-07	PEUGEOT 206 1.4 LOOK, Grey, 5 Dr, RCL, PAS, EW, 89000 Miles	£2,995
2003-03	MAZDA MX-3 1.8 SPORT, Silver, 2 dr Convertible, RCL, PAS, EW, Alloys, 74000 Miles	£2,995
2006-06	PEUGEOT 206 1.4 SPORT, Black, 3 Dr, RCL, PAS, EW, AC, Alloys, 57200 Miles	£2,795
2007-07	FORD KA 1.3 STYLE, Blue, 3 DR, CL, PAS, EW, CD Player, 34700 Miles	£2,695
2005-55	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 LIFE SEMI AUTO, Grey, 5 Door, RCL, PAS, EW, AC, CD Player, 77800 Miles	£2,495
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11 61 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 125PS ZETEC, 5dr, midnight sky met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB radio & CD, PAS, Blue tooth, alloys, front fogs, heated windscreen, ABS, ESP, 29,000 miles

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13 13 B MAX ZETEC 1.0 ECOBOOST 125PS, 5 dr, midnight sky/grey, 5 spd, City pack, e/w&m, Ford Sync, power folding mirrors, rear park sensors, HFS, ABS, multiple airbags, alloys, ex-demonstrator, low mileage 8,800, RFL £30 per year

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11 60 SKODA YETI 1.2 TSI PETROL SE STATION WAGON, 5dr, silver met/grey, 6 spd, low mileage, service history, 12,000 miles

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11 11 C MAX 1.6 PETROL 125PS TITANIUM, micastone met/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, r/CD, heated w'screen, PAS, auto lights/wipers, ABS, ESP, convenience pack, global closing.

£11,995

12 61 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 125PS ZETEC ESTATE, colorado red/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB r/CD, alloys, a/c, ABS, ESP, HFS, front fogs, 6 airbags, Blue tooth USB, rear park sensors, 12 months manufacturers warranty, one owner from new, FSH, 17,900 miles

MINIMUM £1000 Part X on this car

£14,995

58 09 KUGA TITANIUM 2.0 TDCI 4WD, moondust silver met/grey, 6 spd, 17" alloys, e/w&m, Sony DAB radio CD, c/l, cruise control, heated screen, front fogs, a/c, FSH, 34,429 miles

MINIMUM £1000 Part X on this car

£6,995

08 08 FOCUS STYLE 1.6 PETROL 100PS STYLE, 5 dr, ocean blue me/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, PAS, r/CD, a/c, HFS, front fogs, alloys, 6 airbags,

MINIMUM £1000 PART EXCHANGE

08 08 FOCUS STYLE 1.6 PETROL 100PS STYLE, 5 dr, ocean blue me/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, PAS, r/CD, a/c, HFS, front fogs, alloys, 6 airbags, ABS, ESP, low mileage, FSH, 35,959 miles..... **MINIMUM £1000 PART X ON THIS CAR £6,995**

10 60 MONDEO TITANIUM 2.0 PETROL 1.4PS TITANIUM, 5spd, 5 dr, chill met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB radio CD, heated windscreen, climate control, front fogs, alloys, ABS, ESP, cruise, front & rear park sensors, PAS, 7 a/b, auto lights & wipers, Blue tooth, service history, one owner from new, 35,814 miles..... **MINIMUM £1000 PART X ON THIS CAR £9,495**

58 09 KUGA TITANIUM 2.0 TDCI 4WD, moondust silver met/grey, 6 spd, 17" alloys, e/w&m, Sony DAB radio CD, c/l, cruise control, heated screen, front fogs, a/c, FSH, 34,429 miles ..... **MINIMUM £1000 PART X ON THIS CAR £14,995**

FOCUS

09 09 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL TITANIUM AUTO, 5dr, moondust silver/grey, e/w&m, cruise control, auto lights & wipers., c/l, alloys, DAB radio/CD, climate, HFS, 6 airbags, ABS, ESP, 2 owners from new, very low mileage, FSH, 14,055 miles **£7,595**

06 56 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL ZETEC CLIMATE, 5 dr, tonic blue met/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, r/CD, PAS, a/c, HFS, front fogs, 6 airbags, ABS, 2 owners from new, service history, 67,747 miles **£4,795**

11 11 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 115PS ZETEC, 3dr, colorado red/grey, e/w&m, c/l, Blue tooth USB, air con, 5 spd, ABS, ESP, front fogs, HFS, DAD radio/CD, alloys, PAS, 6 airbags, a/c, FSH, one owner from new, very low mileage 27,638 miles **£8,995**

11 61 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 125PS ZETEC, 5dr, midnight sky met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB radio & CD, PAS, Blue tooth, alloys, front fogs, heated windscreen, ABS, ESP, 29,000 miles **£10,395**

08 08 FOCUS 1.8 PETROL 125PS STYLE, 5dr, panther black/grey, c/l, r/CD, e/w&m, PAS, a/c, front fogs, 6 airbags, ESP, 2 owners from new, service history, 53,446 miles **£5,595**

12 61 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 125PS ZETEC ESTATE, colorado red/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB r/CD, alloys, a/c, ABS, ESP, HFS, front fogs, 6 airbags, Blue tooth USB, rear park sensors, 12 months manufacturers warranty, one owner from new, FSH, 17,900 miles **£11,995**

11 60 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL SPORT, 5dr, frozen white/grey titanium, sat nav, Bluetooth, USB, rear park sensors, a/c, alloys, HFS, auto wipers & headlamps, front fogs, e/front windows & mirrors, ABS, 6 airbags, one owner, FSH, 33,500 miles **£8,995**

13 63 FOCUS 1.0 100PS PETROL ZETEC NAVIGATOR NEW MODEL, 5dr, deep impact blue met/grey, sat nav, B'tooth & USB, e/w & m, 17" alloys, privacy glass, ABS, EP, reverse park sensors, 6 airbags, 2 years old and 9 months manufacturer's warranty, only £20 RFL per year, 3,413 miles.... **£13,995**

FIESTA

11 60 FIESTA 1.25 PETROL ZETEC 82PS, 5dr, ink blue met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, r/CD, front fogs, 5 airbags, aircon, HFS, alloys, ABS, ESP, one owner from new, FSH, 35,814 miles, DUE IN SOON **£8,595**

10 60 FIESTA TITANIUM 1.4 PETROL 96PS, 5dr, ink blue met/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, front fogs, cruise control, 5 airbags, alloys, radio/CD, ABS, ESP, PAS, climate, one owner from new, low mileage 15,000 miles, FSH **£9,591**

FUSION

10 60 FUSION 1.4 PETROL ZETEC, 5dr, moondust silver met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, front fogs, r/CD, 2 airbags, PAS, HFS, alloys, ABS, air con, one owner from new, low mileage 19,300 miles **£7,795**

C MAX S MAX B MAX

12 12 GRAND C MAX 1.6 TDCI 115PS DIESEL ZETEC 7 SEATER MPV, midnight sky met/grey, e/w&m, heated windscreen, 6 spd, DAB radio & CD, PAS, c/l, ABS, ESP, Blue tooth, rear park sensors, 6 airbags, alloys, very low mileage 4,228 miles, one owner from new, FSH..... **£13,995**

12 12 S MAX 1.6T ECOBOOST 160PS TITANIUM, panther black met/grey, 6spd, e/w&m, r/CD, c/l, Blue tooth connectivity, HFS, climate, auto lights & wipers, front fogs, cruise, PAS, one owner, full service history, very low mileage 6,200 miles..... **£16,595**

11 11 C MAX 1.6 PETROL 125PS TITANIUM, micastone met/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, r/CD, heated windscreen, PAS, auto lights & wipers, ABS, ESP, convenience pack inc. park assist & fold mirrors, global closing, alloys, very low mileage 5,500 miles, one owner, FSH ..... ***SAVE £600*** **£11,995**

13 13 B MAX ZETEC 1.0 ECOBOOST 125PS, 5 dr, midnight sky/grey, 5 spd, City pack, e/w&m, Ford Sync, power folding mirrors, rear park sensors, HFS, ABS, multiple airbags, alloys, ex-demonstrator, low mileage 8,800 miles, RFL £30 per year..... **£12,995**

KA

09 09 KA STUDIO 1.2 PETROL, 3dr, strobe met/grey, 5 spd, PAS, r/CD 2 a/b, ABS, 2 local owners, FSH, only £30 12 months RFL, 53,400 miles..... **£4,795**

13 63 KA STUDIO 1.2 PETROL, 3dr, flame red/grey, 5 spd, PAS, r/CD, 2 airbags, ABS, delivery mileage only 6 miles, RFL only £30 for 12 months, 3 years manufacturers warranty **£7,995**

13 63 KA STUDIO 1.2 PETROL, 3dr, crystal white/grey, 5 spd, PAS, r/CD, 2 airbags, ABS, delivery mileage only 6 miles, RFL only £30 for 12 months, 3 years manufacturers warranty **£8,195**

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07 57 CITROEN C4 PICASSO MPV AUTO VTR 1.6 HDI DIESEL 110 BHP, 5dr, bronze met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, PAS, a/c, fr fogs, alloys, 6 a/b, ABS, ESP, cruise, S/H, 12 mths RFL £140, 60,647 miles **£4,994**

09 09 FIAT DOBLO DYNAMIC ESTATE 1.4 8V PETROL, 5dr, single wheel chair conversion, 3 SEATS, met red/grey, 5spd, PAS, c/l, access ramp & winch, r/CD, a/c, alloys, a arbags, e/w&m, TWO LOCAL OWNERS FROM NEW, VERY LOW MILEAGE 3,682 miles **£6,995**

07 57 VW POLO 1.2E 60PS, 3dr, blue met/grey, 5 spd, c/l, r/C, PAS, 2 airbags, ABS, low insurance group, RFL 12 months £125, FSH, 57,927 miles..... **£4,395**

11 60 SKODA YETI 1.2 TSI PETROL SE STATION WAGON, 5dr, silver met/grey, 6 spd, e/w&m, c/l, r & 6CD, PAS, climate control, front fogs, 8 airbags, alloys, ABS, ESP, front and rear parking sensors, park assist, roof rails, one owner from new, very low mileage, SH, 12,000 miles **£11,995**

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04 54 FOCUS .16I PETROL LX HATCH, tonic blue met/grey, 5 spd, a/c, PAS, e/w, heated front screen, alloys, r/CD, 4 airbags, ABS, 2 owners from new, 76,474 miles **£3,495**

03 53 PEUGEOT 307CC COUPE, black met/grey, 5spd, e/w&m, c/l, r/CD, climate, PAS, alloys, 4 airbags, ABS, rear park sensors, ESP, very low mileage 34,048 miles, 2 owners from new, FSH.. **£3,995**

03 53 FOCUS GHIA 2.0 PETROL AUTO ESTATE, deep rosso red met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, r & 6 CD player, PAS, climate, HFS, front fogs, alloys, 4 airbags, ABS, traction control, 3 owners from new, service history, low mileage for age 73,281 miles **£3,495**

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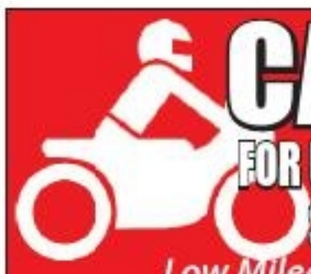

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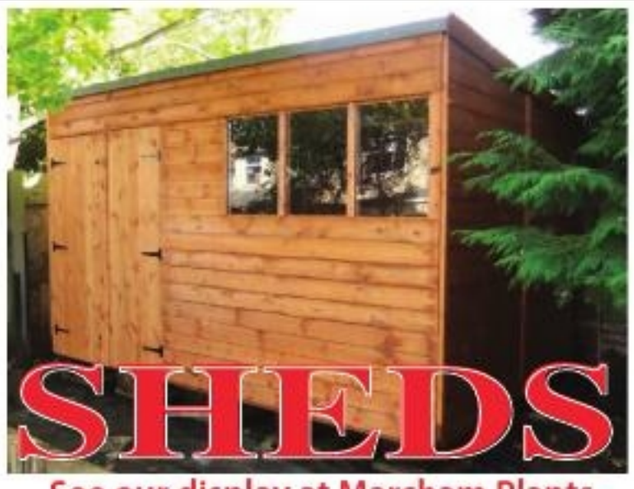

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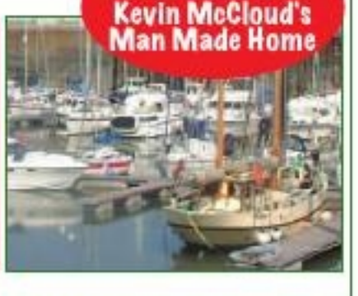
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man seeking

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ICE cream maker, Kenwood used twice boxed with instructions, £10, 01235 817248

TABLE, with ski legs to slide under bed or chair wood & cream metal new, £15, 01235 817248

BREAKFAST bar set, with 2 stools beech aluminium style perfect condition, £35, 01235 817248

BATH seat, slatted new still in box 8" high with suction feet, £10, 01235 817248

METAL ladder, extending from 10-18', £55ono, 01235 526746

MAHOGANY drop leaf round table, 4 well made chairs excellent condition, £40ono, 01235 512861

SEALY king size bed, (base only) loads of storage below excellent condition, £60ono, 01235 512861

CRICKET bats, 1920s 1930s Jack Hobbs Don Bradman Cyril Washbrook vgc, £60 the lot, 01993 778827

FISHING waders, full body size used once top quality, £50, 01993 778827

FOOT exerciser, easy sit inc hair pedal away, £10, 01235 814341

LARGE Portmeirion, storage jar, £12, 01235 817658

CANTEEN silver plated cutlery, 44 pieces, £45, 01235 817658

WARTIME RAF uniforms, flying clothing log books wanted by local collector, Julian 01869 350478

WANTED, any old aeroplane parts for display also RAF equipment, Julian 01869 350478

VAUXHALL Zafira roof box, bars fit 2010 onwards, £50ono, 07909 225332

VOYAGE through the universe, book set, £10, 01869 324806

THE enchanted world, book set, £10, 01869 324806

CHARLES Dickens books, £10, 01869 324806

GRIMMS fairy tales, £20, 01869 324806

BLUE folding camping chair, strong steel frame - backed polyester seat - folds flat includes drink holder carry bag 87h 53w 53d brand new, £5, 01869 324806

GENUINE Isuzu Rodeo, rubber rear bed mat brand new never used, £20, 01869 324806

ISUZU Rodeo carpet mat, for rear load area brand new never used, £20, 01869 324806

ISUZU Rodeo, rubber interior floor mat front & rear brand new never used, £20, 01869 324806

BULBS, 12v 55w 448513 pair still boxed, £5, 01869 324806

ZIP up fleece jacket, new large unisex very warm cost £28 sell, £10 Garsington, 01865 361363

CORDLESS phone not mobile cost £25 sell, £10, 01865 361363

CAR heater, for cold mornings plug into car lighter socket switch to cool fan in summer new £25 sell, £10 Garsington, 01865 361363

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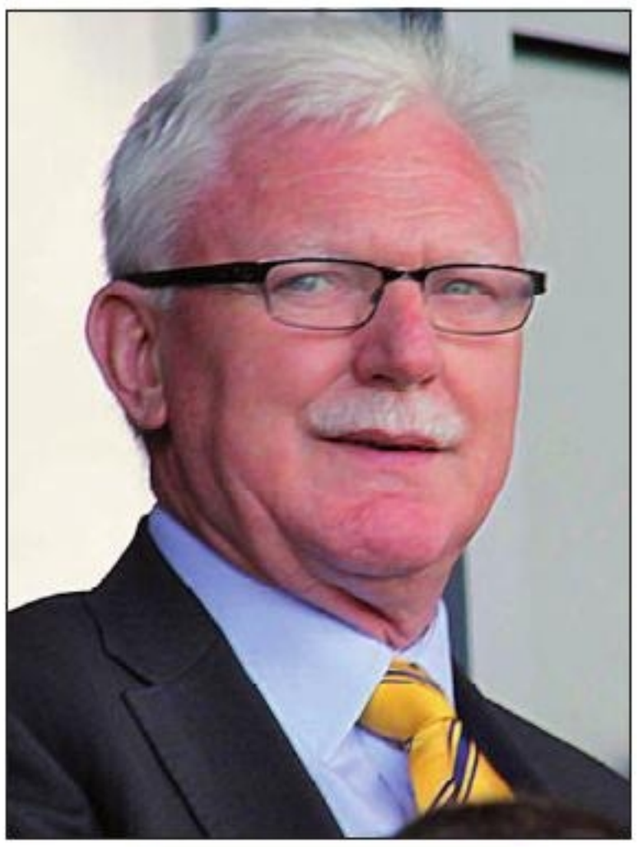

• *Chris Wilder, Ian Lenagan and Mickey Lewis.*

Wilder exit disappoints chairman

OXFORD United chairman Ian Lenagan says he is "disappointed" that Chris Wilder did not see out the season with the club.

United are currently fifth in League Two but after resigning last Sunday, Wilder was confirmed as the new Northampton Town boss on Monday.

The 46-year-old's last game in charge was Saturday's 1-0 home win over Torquay United.

After the match, Lenagan said he understood Wilder had told the players he was going and that he would not be back at Oxford.

The club confirmed last Sunday that the board had accepted Wilder's resignation.

Lenagan said: "First and foremost we thank Chris for five years of service at Oxford United.

"He has worked very hard and helped move the club from the Conference to becoming an established League Two side.

"We are grateful for his efforts on behalf of Oxford but disappointed that he chose not to continue to the end of this season's journey."

Lenagan confirmed that the club have begun a "thorough, professional search and interview process" for the next permanent manager.

RYAN Clarke says he found Tuesday night's goalless draw at Exeter City as mentally one of the hardest games of his career.

United returned to action just two days after Chris Wilder resigned from the club to join Northampton Town, with assistant manager Mickey Lewis in temporary charge.

A gutsy performance on a heavy pitch saw United come away with a hard-fought point which lifted them up to fifth in the League Two table.

Clarke made a string of saves to ensure the U's kept their unbeaten league away record intact but admitted that he found the circumstances tough.

By Jack Johnson
jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

"I found that the hardest game mentally in my career," said the 31-year-old.

"In terms of everything that has gone on, that doesn't mean anything against what has happened with Mickey and Mel (Andy Melville) coming in, but just the whole change in manager.

"It is the first time in my career that a manager has left the club when I have been playing regularly.

"But as professionals you first and foremost go out and make sure you do your job and it was a good performance where our team spirit came together and we got a good point for ourselves and most importantly Mickey, Mel and the football club."

Wilder previously described Clarke as his best ever signing.

The United keeper added: "He brought me to the club and took a chance on me and I've not looked back since.

"I love playing for this club and of course naturally I'm gutted he's gone. But you just pick yourself up and go again. The most important thing is that we get promotion and that is what we are aiming to do."

Lewis has not ruled himself out of taking on the job permanently and was pleased with the spirit of his players on Tuesday night.

"I thought the lads showed great spirit," Lewis said.

"Looking at the league table, Exeter are 15th but I always feel they are one of the better teams in the league with some really good players.

"It is a tough place to come to and in the last four league games we have won two and drawn two so that's good in anyone's book."

United welcome AFC Wimbledon to the Kassam Stadium this Saturday but could be without Michael Raynes who picked up a suspected hip injury against Exeter.

Wantage face cup replay, Nomads go through

WANTAGE will have to replay their Bluefin Challenge Cup third round tie at Shrivenham after last Saturday's match was abandoned at half-time.

Gary Ackling's men found themselves 3-2 down before the game was called off because of adverse weather conditions leading to a waterlogged pitch.

However, Wantage were completely up against it before the match was abandoned.

Shrivenham took a 2-0 lead but Jimmy Deabill and Tom Malton netted to level the tie at 2-2.

The hosts netted a third before the break and will be the more frustrated of the two sides that the tie was brought to an abrupt end.

Ackling's men face Highworth Town this weekend in the Hellenic Premier Division.

Elsewhere, Oxford City Nomads progressed from the second round of the Challenge Cup with a 3-2 win at Fairford Town.

Nomads return to league action this weekend and host Newbury while Abingdon Town travel to Ascot United.

Smith excited ahead of new MotoGP season

TECH3 rider Bradley Smith is excited ahead of his second year in MotoGP, which begins in March, and can't wait to build upon last year's end of season testing.

The 23-year-old from Oxford is joined by 2013 Moto2 champion Pol Espargaro at Yamaha's satellite team and is hoping to achieve great things this year.

Smith, who finished second in Valencia testing at the end of last year and only three tenths behind world champion Marc Marquez, said: "If that is already the starting level, then we have got to take the opportunity with both hands and see where we can end up.

"The Factory team is always going to develop and improve, you have to understand that, but Yamaha really do look after the satellite riders.

"With both Pol and I being young riders coming through, I think we will get really good support so I'm quite excited."

There has been much speculation about how competitive the new 'Open' specification machines will be compared to the satellite teams.

Smith added: "I think qualifying is going to be a lot closer.

"We are going to see a couple of upsets in qualifying where, with the faster engines and maybe on a really grippy track, we will see a front row from the Open bikes; from the FTR-Yamaha, I am quite certain we will see a front row.

"Aleix (Espargaro) and Colin (Edwards) are going to have more power and more fuel, so they can open that thing wide open for their qualifying laps."

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Sport Bites

Tied for 63rd

ABINGDON golfer Eddie Pepperell carded a final round of 68 to finish tied for 63rd at the Commercial Bank Qatar Masters.

Pepperell took home €4,487 in prize money and is 127th in the Race to Dubai rankings with a total of €14,745 so far this year.

Spaniard and World No.9 Sergio Garcia won the Qatar Masters, beating Mikko Ilonen in a play-off.

Gutsy draw

OXFORD City Stars went top of the National Ice Hockey League South 2 last Sunday with a 2-2 draw with Chelmsford Warriors.

Stars were 3-2 down with minutes remaining but James Pentecost slammed the puck home at the back post to salvage a draw.

This weekend Stars face Swindon Wildcats.

Hawks held

OXFORD Hawks Men's 1s were held to a 2-2 draw by Lewes Men's 1s last weekend.

Charlie Ellison converted a short corner in the second half but Hawks were denied a successive win this calender year when the visitors equalised with Oxford reduced to nine.

Next up for Hawks is an away trip to Old Georgians Men's 1s this Saturday.

Quins keep up pace with fifth win on the bounce

LEAGUE leaders Oxford Harlequins made it five wins in a row in South West 1 East with a 13-7 victory over Towcestrians.

Quins not only had to deal with the weather but also the physical presence of their opponents.

Zac Norris kicked two penalties to give Quins a 6-0 lead before three players were binned in a feisty period.

Keni Fisilau went over after half-time, with Norris converting, before a late Towcestrians try saw the match end 13-7.

Quins are now a dominant 12 points ahead of second-placed Windsor.

Elsewhere in South West 1 East, Grove were beaten 21-17 by Devizes.

In the SSE National League 2 South, Chinnor suffered a fourth loss in five games as they were beaten 31-14 by Hartpury College.

Do you have an Oxford story?
Contact James
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More Sport inside: Golf: Tied for 63rd | Ice hockey: Gutsy draw

BURNELL - I WAS REALLY PLEASED

Exiles coach delighted with players after resilient win over Leeds

JUSTIN Burnell hailed the endeavour of his players as they returned to the top of the Greene King IPA Championship following a 19-10 win over Leeds Carnegie.

A Seb Stegmann try helped Welsh to victory, after they had fallen behind through a James Doherty cross.

The Exiles lost skipper Tom May to injury late on, but that was the only downside of a very battling display.

"It was a good win; I was really pleased with that win today," said Burnell.

"I was pleased with our endeavour; the one thing we always bring to the table and we always talk about is that our attitude is phenomenal - 18-3 down to London Scottish last week.

"I do think Leeds are realistically the best team in the league – I've got a lot of respect for Leeds.

"Today it was about our endeavour to just hang in there. At halftime, as close as it was, I just knew the game would never go from us because of our spirit. That's what chuffed me the most.

"Beating the form team in the league is always nice.

By **James Booker**
jamesb@taylornewspapers.co.uk

"Everyone seems to come to London Welsh wanting to beat us, and it was nice for us today, with little pressure knowing that Leeds are the best team in the league, to beat them."

"I put it down to training. We're very personal in training on our performances and our standards – if you make a mistake in training or the training session starts dropping off then there are some strong words said.

"I think they know as the game unfolds that if it drops off then there's a switch inside them thinking of our training and our mind set. No one is allowed in training to drop off."

Welsh have also announced this week of their intention to move from the Kassam Stadium to Witney Town Football Club's old Polythene Stadium.

The Exiles have been at the Kassam since September 2012, but are finding it difficult to justify costs.

The plans, submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council, will see capacity increase to 10,000, with 6,000 temporary seats.

London Welsh	19
Leeds Carnegie	10

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